

DIGITAL EDITION

GUNSLINGER GIRL

STORY & ART BY
YU AIDA

Vol. 12



SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

GUNSLINGER GIRL

VOLUME 12

story and art by YU AIDA

TRANSLATION
Adrienne Beck

ADAPTATION
Janet Houck

RETOUCH AND LETTERING
Roland Amago

LAYOUT
Bambi Eloriaga-Amago

COVER DESIGN
Nicky Lim

COPY EDITOR
Shanti Whitesides

EDITOR
Adam Arnold

PUBLISHER
Jason DeAngelis

GUNSLINGER GIRL VOLUME 12

Copyright © 2010 Yu Aida

First published in 2010 by ASCII MEDIA WORKS, Tokyo, Japan.

English translation rights arranged with ASCII MEDIA WORKS.

No portion of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form without written permission from the copyright holders. This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is entirely coincidental.

Seven Seas books may be purchased in bulk for promotional, educational, or business use. Please contact your local bookseller or the Macmillan Corporate and Premium Sales Department at 1-800-221-7945, extension 5442, or by e-mail at MacmillanSpecialMarkets@macmillan.com.

Seven Seas and the Seven Seas logo are trademarks of Seven Seas Entertainment, LLC. All rights reserved.

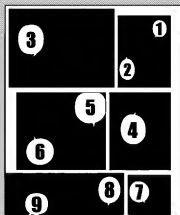
Ebook Edition: July 2017

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

FOLLOW US ONLINE: www.gomanga.com

READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from *right to left*, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at



CHARACTERS

登場人物紹介



JEAN CROCE

Jose's older brother. Very serious-minded and business-like. He is the cyborg handlers' leader and field commander for Section 2 operations. He lost his family and fiancée to a terrorist bombing.



RICO

Former quadriplegic. Innocent and cheerful, even the most common everyday things bring her much joy. Her handler is Jean.

Ex-military, he swore revenge against Padania when he lost his entire family, except for his brother Jean, to a terrorist bombing. He is kind to Henrietta, but he finds himself disturbed at how much he unconsciously imposes his late sister's image onto her.

JOSE CROCE



HENRIETTA

The only survivor of a slaughtered family of six. Thanks to her "conditioning" when she was converted into a cyborg, she is blindly in love with her handler, Jose. And thanks to the drugs used in that conditioning, she is losing her memories now.



HILSHIRE

German. Former detective with Europol. His only desire is to see Triela live for as long as possible. He considers it his duty to watch over and protect her.



TRIELA

Responsible and conscientious, Triela is the "big sister" of the cyborgs. Having learned about her past, she has decided that she wants to live. Her handler is Hilshire.

BEATRICE

A first-generation cyborg, Beatrice doesn't speak much. In fact, she does not display much emotion at all. Her handler is Bernardo.



BERNARDO

An agent for Section 2 and Beatrice's handler. He loves to talk a lot.





PETRUSHKA (PETRA)

The first of the new, second-generation cyborgs. She respects her handler Alessandro as a partner, and she has a crush on him from more than just her "conditioning"



ALESSANDRO (SANDRO) RICCI

A new handler transferred from the Agency's Public Safety division over to Section 2. Prior to his transfer, his missions centered around infiltrating Padania terrorist groups. He has a talent for observation.

GIACOMO DANTE

An experienced terrorist behind many well-known acts of terrorism. He is the prime suspect in the Croce Incident.



ASHIQ

A Middle Eastern terrorist. One of Giacomo's men.



ENRICA

Jean and Jose's much younger sister. Killed in the Croce Incident.



CLAES

When she lost her handler, she became the Agency's "guinea pig" cyborg. All cyborg developments are first tested on her.



MONICA MARIA PETRIS

Director of both Section 1 and 2. She has taken a hard line stance in opposition to terrorism.



LORENZO

Section 2 chief. Formerly employed with the Ministry of the Interior.

SALLES

A Major in the GIS special forces.



SOPHIA DURANTE

Jean's fiancée. Killed in the Croce Incident.



MARCANTONIO ABBADO

An old buddy of Jose, from his days in the Carabinieri.



K E Y W O R D S

用語解説

[CYBORG]

Experimental technology created by the Agency. Critically-injured children have their natural muscles and organs replaced with artificial ones, then they are brainwashed by a special procedure called "conditioning".

[FIVE REPUBLICS FACTION]

Commonly referred to as "Padania." An anti-globalization, right-wing group advocating for the affluent Northern provinces of Italy to secede and form their own country.

[THE SOCIAL WELFARE AGENCY]

A counter-intelligence organization created in secret by the Prime Minister's office, charged with curbing the growth of radical-right groups in an already turbulent Italy.



NORTHERN ITALY,
MILAN



MOTHER, CARLA
CORPORATE LAWYER

I SEE...
HOW NICE.
I HEAR
YOU HAVE
SIBLINGS?

CHAPTER 67: NEW FAMILY







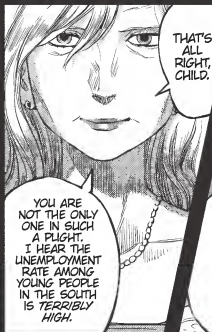
THERE
ARE JUST
SO FEW
JOBS
DOWN IN
SICILY.

I'M
SORRY.
WHAT
JEAN
SAID
WAS
THE
TRUTH.

NNH
...!



SIGNORINA
SOPHIA.



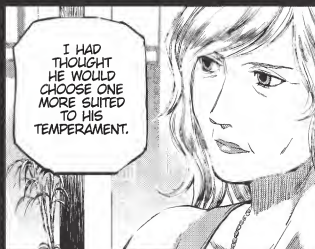
THAT'S
ALL
RIGHT,
CHILD.

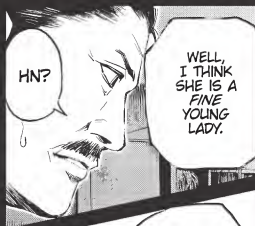
YOU ARE
NOT THE ONLY
ONE IN SUCH
A PLIGHT.
I HEAR THE
UNEMPLOYMENT
RATE AMONG
YOUNG PEOPLE
IN THE SOUTH
IS TERRIBLY
HIGH.

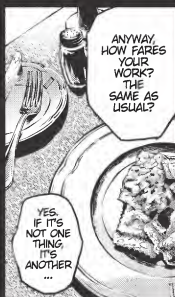


BUT I
LIKED
BEING A
SOLDIER.

IT REALLY
FELT LIKE
I WAS
WORKING
TO MAKE
PEOPLE'S
LIVES
BETTER.

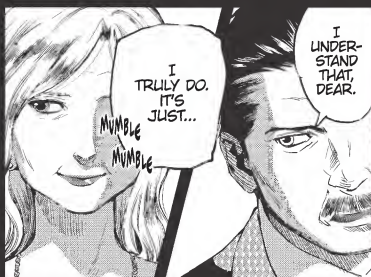






ANYWAY, HOW FARES YOUR WORK? THE SAME AS USUAL?

YES, IF IT'S NOT ONE THING, IT'S ANOTHER ...



I TRULY DO. IT'S JUST...

MUMBLE
MUMBLE

I UNDERSTAND THAT, DEAR.



AND THAT ISN'T THE WORST OF IT... SEVERAL RIGHT-WING EXTREMIST GROUPS ARE SAID TO BE WORKING WITH THE POLITICIANS TO FURTHER STIR THINGS UP.

IT SEEMS THE RECENT UNREST IN THE NORTH IS DUE TO LOCAL POLITICAL GROUPS DELIBERATELY AGITATING THE PEOPLE.



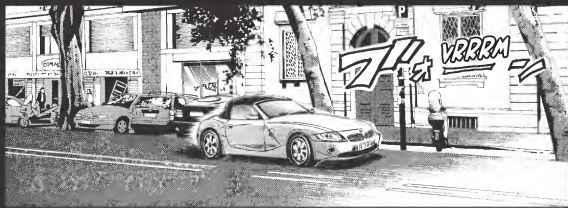
MY, MY... I'M FLATTERED YOU HAVE SUCH A HIGH OPINION OF ME.

THIS COUNTRY WOULD BE SO MUCH BETTER OFF IF YOU WERE IN THE CABINET, YOU KNOW.



IF THE ECONOMY WAS BETTER, EVERYONE WOULD BE TOO CONTENT TO BOTHER LISTENING TO THE AGITATORS.

BEFORE TRYING TO FIX THE PEOPLE'S IDEALS, THE ECONOMY MUST BE PUT TO RIGHTS.



HMPH.
THEY'LL
THINK I'M
SOME
BACKWATER
SICILIAN HICK
FOR SURE
NOW.

BETTER
THEY FIND
OUT
SOONER
THAN
LATER.

JUST BE
YOURSELF.
IT WILL
ALL BE
FINE.

DON'T LET
YOURSELF
GET
CAUGHT UP
IN THEIR
STIFF FOR-
MALITY.



HUH...?
WHY
ARE WE
TURNING
HERE?

YEAH,
YEAH.
EASIER
SAID
THAN
DONE.



GOD, JEAN!
WHY DID YOU
HAVE TO
OPEN YOUR
BIG, FAT
MOUTH?!

NOW YOUR
PARENTS
TOTALLY
HAVE A BAD
IMPRESSION
OF ME!



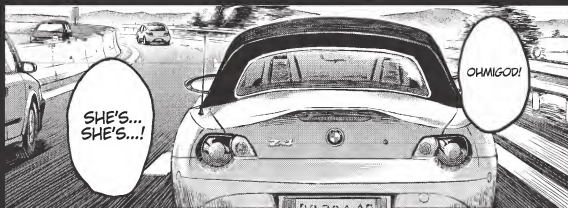
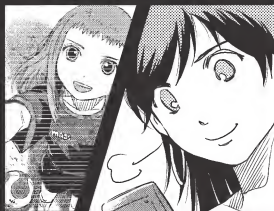
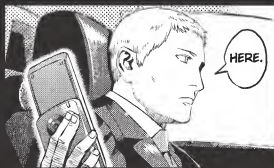
OH.

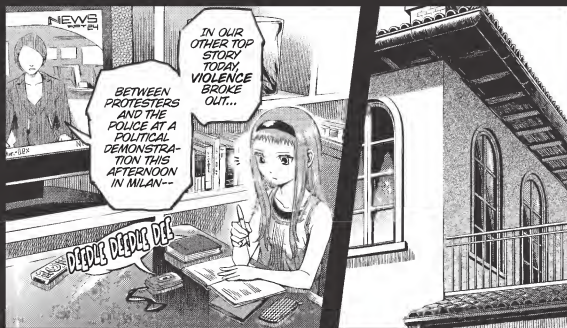
IT'S
PROBABLY
BEST TO
AVOID
DOWNTOWN
MILAN.

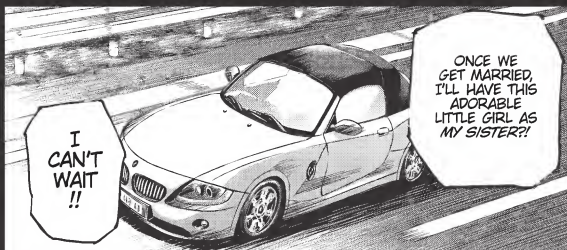
I HEARD
ON THE
RADIO THERE
IS GOING TO
BE A DEM-
ONSTRATION
TODAY.



**IL FEDERALISMO CI RENDE
PIÙ RICCHI!**
"FEDERALISM WILL MAKE OUR COUNTRY RICH!"





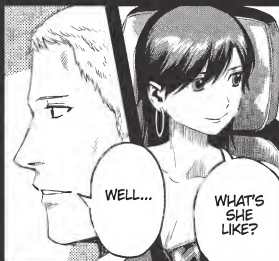


I
CAN'T
WAIT
!!

ONCE WE
GET MARRIED,
I'LL HAVE THIS
ADORABLE
LITTLE GIRL AS
MY SISTER?!

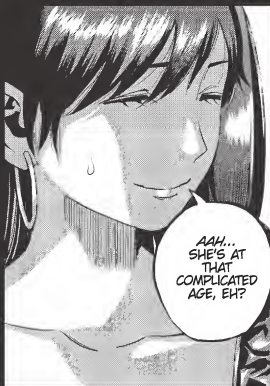


HOWEVER,
JOSE
MENTIONED
SHE SAID
SOMETHING
RECENTLY
ABOUT
JOINING THE
CARABINIERI.



WELL...

WHAT'S
SHE
LIKE?

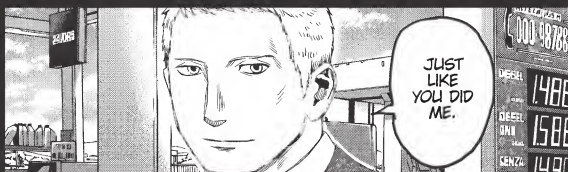


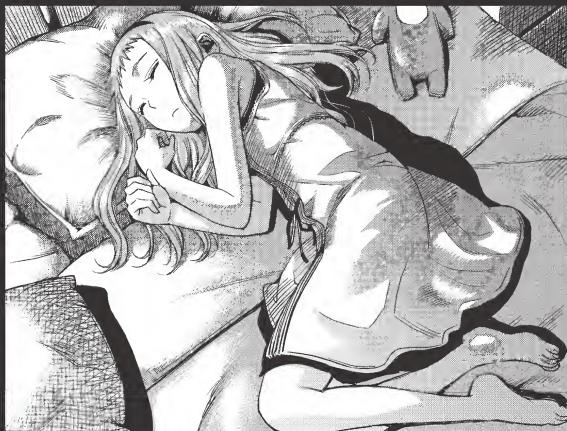
AAH...
SHE'S AT
THAT
COMPLICATED
AGE, EH?

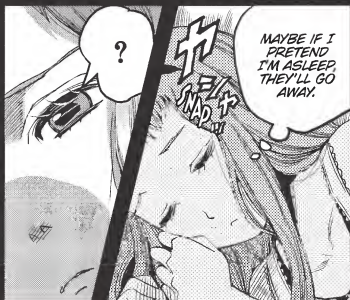


FATHER IS
ATTEMPTING
TO RAISE HER
TO BE AN
INTELLIGENT
ACADEMIC.

I HEAR
SHE
ENJOYS
PLAYING
THE HARP.



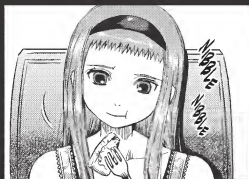


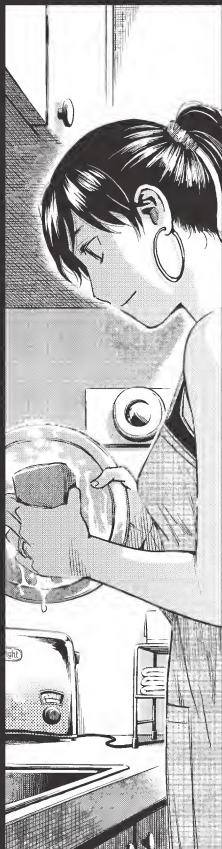




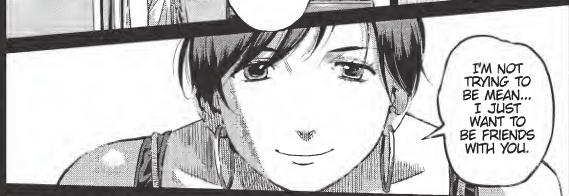
SORRY,
I--

















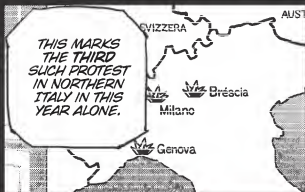
AT A
POLITICAL
DEMONSTRATION
THIS
AFTERNOON
IN MILAN.

VIOLENCE
BROKE OUT
BETWEEN
PROTESTERS
AND THE
POLICE...

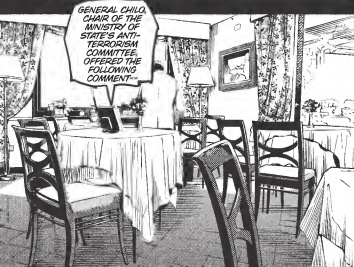
IN OUR
OTHER
TOP
STORY
TODAY...



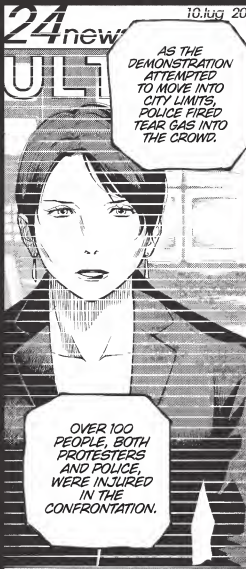
THE PROTEST
WAS ORGANIZED
BY NORTHERN
POLITICAL
GROUPS IN
FAVOR OF
SECESSION
FROM ITALY.



THIS MARKS
THE THIRD
SUCH PROTEST
IN NORTHERN
ITALY IN THIS
YEAR ALONE.



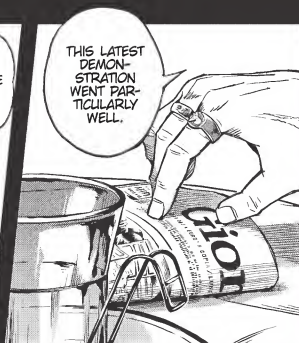
GENERAL CHILLO,
CHAIR OF THE
MINISTRY OF
STATE'S ANTI-
TERRORISM
COMMITTEE,
OFFERED THE
FOLLOWING
COMMENT--



AS THE
DEMONSTRATION
ATTEMPTED
TO MOVE INTO
CITY LIMITS,
POLICE FIRED
TEAR GAS INTO
THE CROWD.

OVER 100
PEOPLE, BOTH
PROTESTERS
AND POLICE,
WERE INJURED
IN THE
CONFRONTATION.

Tokyo NIKKEI +0.56%





MILAN'S
CHIEF
PROSECUTOR,
GIOVANNI
CROCE.

AND
THIS
MAN...



NO...
WE WILL
CHANGE
THEIR
WAY OF
THINKING.

WE'LL
SHOW THEM
JUST WHO
IT IS IN
THEIR BEST
INTERESTS
TO
SUPPORT.



IS THERE
NO WAY OF
DEALING
WITH HIM?



HE CAN
BE...
REMOVED,
YES.

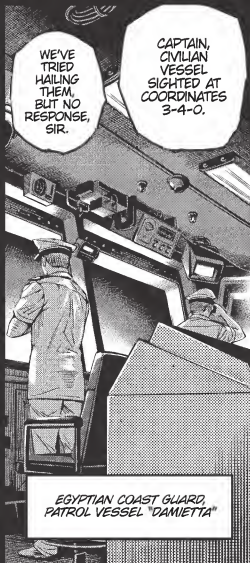
HOWEVER,
THAT MAY
SIMPLY GIVE
THE PEOPLE
A MARTYR
TO RALLY
BEHIND.

ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT,
ABU QIR BAY

BW0000

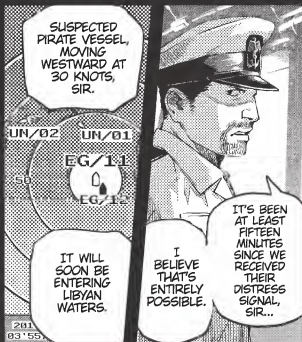


DO YOU
THINK
THEY'VE
ABAN-
DONED
SHIP?



WE'VE
TRIED
HAILING
THEM,
BUT NO
RESPONSE,
SIR.

CAPTAIN,
CIVILIAN
VESSEL
SIGHTED AT
COORDINATES
3-4-0.



SUSPECTED
PIRATE VESSEL,
MOVING
WESTWARD AT
30 KNOTS,
SIR.

UN/02

UN/01

EG/11

50

EG/12

IT WILL
SOON BE
ENTERING
LIBYAN
WATERS.

I
BELIEVE
THAT'S
ENTIRELY
POSSIBLE.

IT'S BEEN
AT LEAST
FIFTEEN
MINUTES
SINCE WE
RECEIVED
THEIR
DISTRESS
SIGNAL,
SIR...

EGYPTIAN COAST GUARD,
PATROL VESSEL "DAMIETTA"



هل حدث شيء ما؟
(DID SOMETHING
HAPPEN?)



TAKE US
TO 1,000
METERS
OUT, AND
HOLD
POSITION.

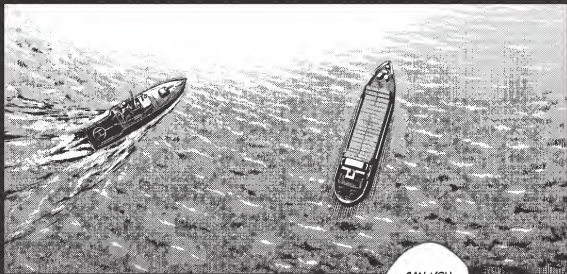
SEND
RESCUE
ORDERS
TO OUR
ESCORT
SHIP,
DAMANHUR.



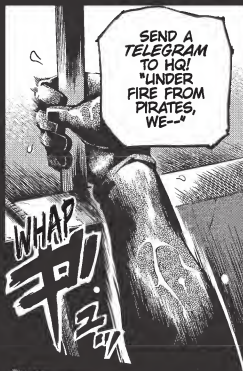
ابق مادناً
(SHUT UP AND
SIT STILL.)

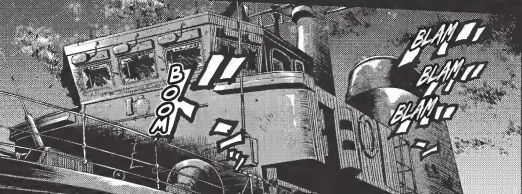
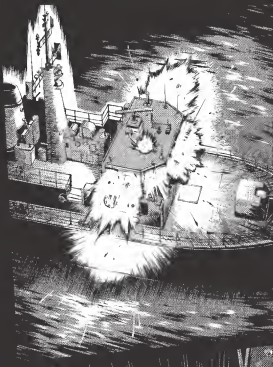
لا دخل لك
(THAT'S NONE OF
YOUR BUSINESS.)

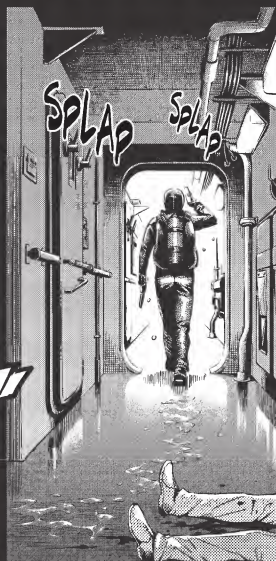
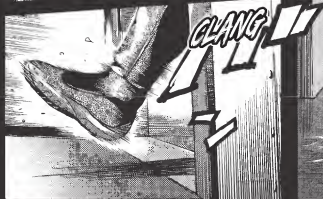


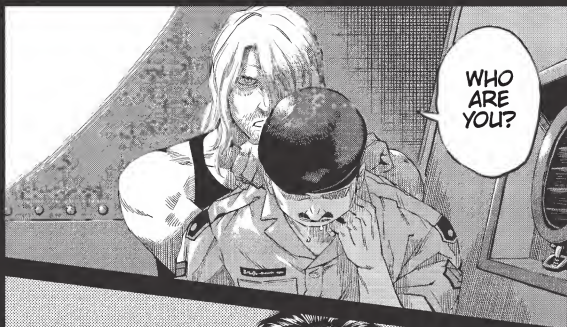












WHO
ARE
YOU?



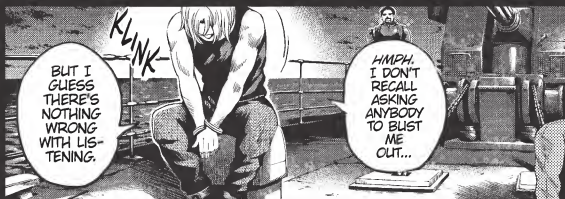
MY BOSS
WANTS
TO HAVE
A LITTLE
CHAT
WITH YOU.

COME
WITH
ME.



FINDING
YOU WAS
QUITE
THE
CHORE.

GIACOMO
DANTE...





NOPE.
I'VE BEEN
LIVING IN
EGYPT FOR
A LONG
TIME NOW.



HE IS AN
UPRIGHT,
HONEST MAN...
AND HE IS
WORKING HARD
TO CRUSH ANY
RIGHT-WING
ACTIVITY.



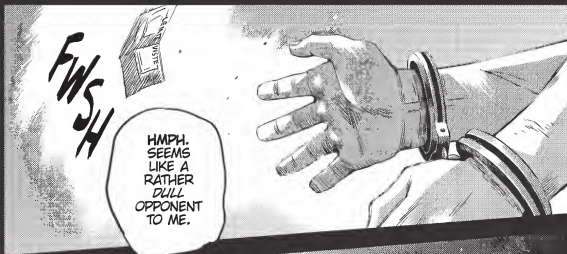
HAVE YOU
HEARD OF A
MAN NAMED
GIOVANNI
CROCE?



TO THE
LEFT-WING
SUPPORTERS
IN ITALY,
HE MUST
SEEM A
HERO.

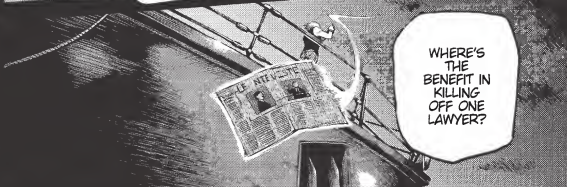


I
WOULD
LIKE
YOU TO
KILL
THIS
MAN.



FWSH

HMPH.
SEEMS
LIKE A
RATHER
DULL
OPPONENT
TO ME.



WHERE'S
THE
BENEFIT IN
KILLING
OFF ONE
LAWYER?



PERSONALLY,
I FEEL THAT
THIS IS...
NOT THE
BEST OF
PLANS.

IT IS THE
UPPER
LEVELS OF MY
ORGANIZATION
WHO WISH
HIM DEAD,
NOT ME.

IF YOU
DON'T WANT
TO DO IT,
THEN DON'T
DO IT!

YOU
HAVE THE
FREEDOM
TO DO
WHATEVER
YOU WANT!
THAT'S
HUMANITY'S
RIGHT!!

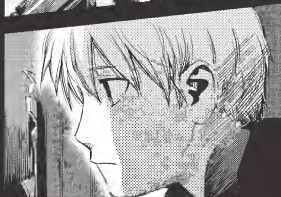
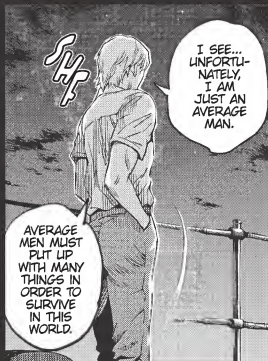
MAKING AN
EXAMPLE OF
THOSE WHO
DO NOT
SUBMIT IS
SIMPLY...
REGIONAL
CHARACTER.

HOWEVER,
I AM NOT
CALLING
THE
SHOTS
HERE.

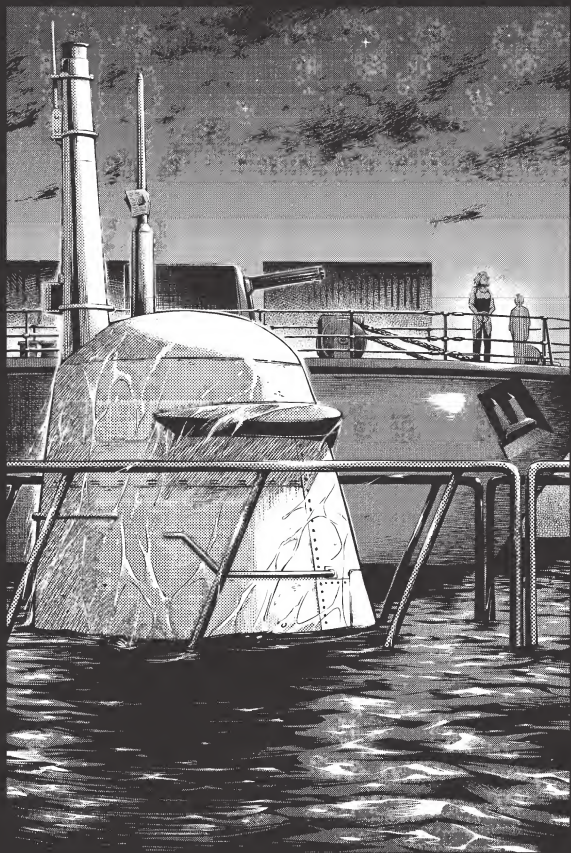
THAT IS
HOW I
EXPLAIN
IT TO
MYSELF,
ANYWAY.

AHA
HA
HA
HA!!

WHAT
THE HELL
IS THAT?!
GOD,
THAT'S A
POOR
EXCUSE!







CHAPTER 69:
THE CROCE INCIDENT (2)

THE
MILITARY
POLICE?!

YOU WANNA
JOIN THE
CARABINIERI
WHEN YOU
GROW UP?
FOR REAL?!

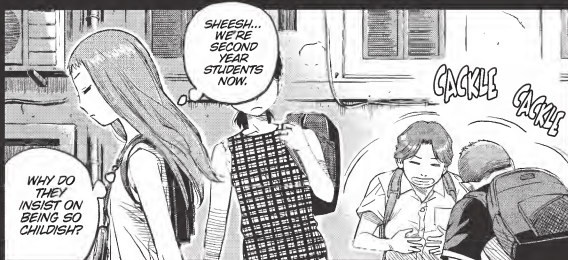
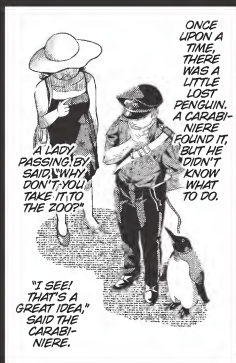
SERIOUSLY
?!

IS
THERE A
PROBLEM
WITH
THAT?

YES,
I DO.

YOU
KNOW
WHAT
PEOPLE
SAY
ABOUT
THEM.

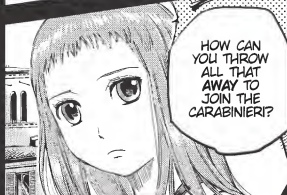
IT'S
JUST,
WELL....





AND
YOU'RE A
GENIUS
AT MUSIC,
TOO!

YEAH!
I MEAN,
YOU STARTED
FOOTBALL
YEARS AFTER
ME, AND
YOU'RE BETTER
AT IT THAN
I AM.



HOW CAN
YOU THROW
ALL THAT
AWAY TO
JOIN THE
CARABINIERI?



THE MILITARY
POLICE
TOTALLY ISN'T
THE RIGHT
JOB FOR
YOU!!

ENRICA,
WHAT'S
GOTTEN
INTO
YOU?!

OH?

GAINING
NEW SKILLS
ISN'T HARD.
STUDY LONG
ENOUGH,
AND YOU CAN
LEARN ANY
SKILL YOU
WANT.



OH...

BUT THERE
ARE THINGS
I WANT
THAT SKILLS
WON'T
GET ME...

I'M DOING
FINE.
EVERYTHING
IS STILL
THE SAME,
HERE AT
HOME.

DEAR
JOSE,
HOW
ARE YOU
DOING?

TAKA TAKA

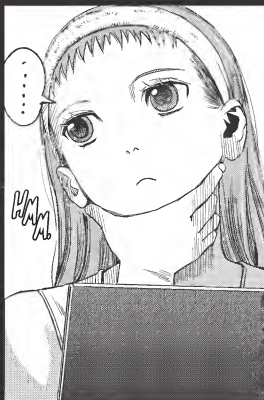
I PAY CLOSE
ATTENTION TO
SEE IF THERE
HAVE BEEN
ANY ITALIAN
CASUALTIES,
OR IF THEY
MIGHT EVEN
SHOW YOU
ON-SCREEN.

I WATCH THE
NEWS EVERY
DAY TO SEE IF
THERE'S A
STORY ON
THE BALKAN
PEACEKEEPING
OPERATION.

I TALKED
WITH MY
FRIENDS
TODAY,
AND THEY
INSULTED THE
CARABINIERI
AGAIN.

I'M GOING
TO JOIN
THEM WHEN
I GROW UP,
BUT SHE
CALLED IT A
"WASTE OF
TALENT."

TAKA TAKA



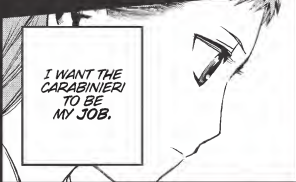


YOU ARE
GOING TO TELL
ME AGAIN
NOT TO DO
IT BECAUSE
IT'S TOO
DANGEROUS.
I CAN ALMOST
HEAR YOU
SAY IT.

REPUBLIC OF SERBIA,
PRESEVO VALLEY



I LIKE
PLAYING THE
HARP AND
FOOTBALL,
BUT THOSE
ARE
HOBBIES.



I WANT THE
CARABINIERI
TO BE
MY JOB.



BUT
DID YOU
KNOW
THIS,
JOSE?

UNITED NATIONS
PEACEKEEPING FORCE,
ITALIAN DIVISION



IN OTHER
WORDS,
IT'S DAN-
GEROUS
EVERY-
WHERE.

EVERY YEAR,
OVER 5,000
PEOPLE DIE
IN TRAFFIC
ACCIDENTS
IN ITALY.



WHETHER
A PERSON
LIVES OR
DIES IS UP
TO THE FATE
THAT GOD
HAS GIVEN
THEM.



DEAR
ENRICA:

IT'S GOOD
TO HEAR
YOU ARE
WELL. I'M
DOING FINE
MYSELF.



WHEN WE GO OUT ON
OUR TWO-HOUR
PATROLS, WE HAVE TO
WEAR THESE BIG,
BULKY, ANTI-
RADIATION SUITS.

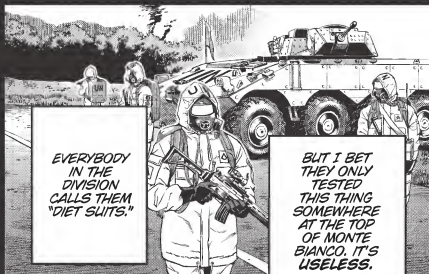


I'M AFRAID
I CAN'T
TELL YOU
THE DETAILS
OF MY
MISSION...

I'M SORRY
MY
RESPONSE
IS SO
LATE.

HOWEVER,
I CAN
DEFINITELY
SAY IT WAS
FAR MORE
DANGEROUS
THAN THE
STREETS
OF ROME.

I JUST
RETURNED
TO CAMP
FROM A
WEEK OUT
IN THE
FIELD.



EVERYBODY
IN THE
DIVISION
CALLS THEM
"DIET SUITS."

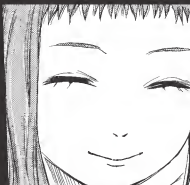
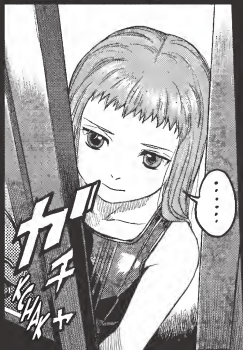
BUT I BET
THEY ONLY
TESTED
THIS THING
SOMEWHERE
AT THE TOP
OF MONTE
BIANCO. IT'S
USELESS.

THE COMPANY
MAKING THE
SUITS MADE A
BIG FUSS
ABOUT HOW IT
HAS A BUILT-IN
COOLING UNIT...

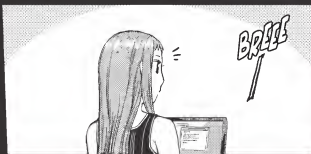


IT'S NOT A
PLACE THAT
WOULD BE
SUITABLE
FOR YOU
AT ALL,
ENRICA.

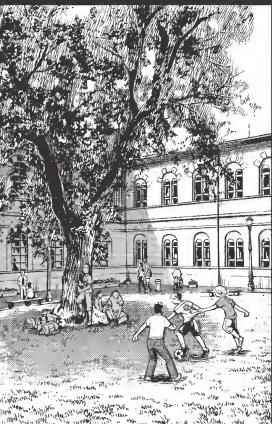
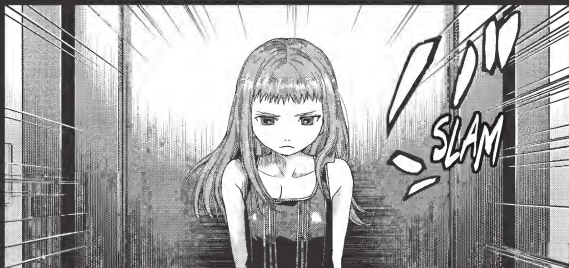
ANYWAY,
LIFE HERE
AT CAMP IS
WELL-REMOVED
FROM ANYTHING
LIKE MODERN
CIVILIZATION.

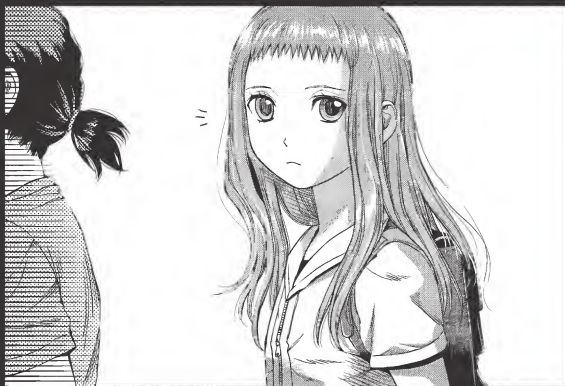
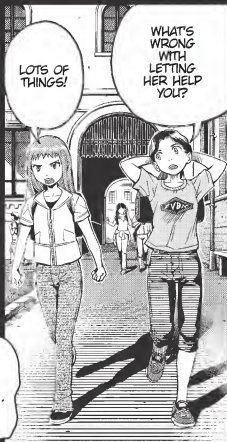


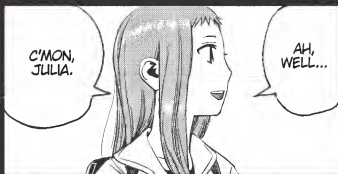
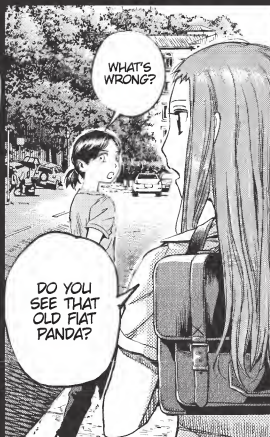
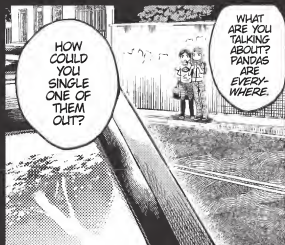
AT LEAST,
NOT UNTIL
YOU'RE OLD
ENOUGH
TO START
WORRYING
ABOUT
YOUR
WEIGHT!

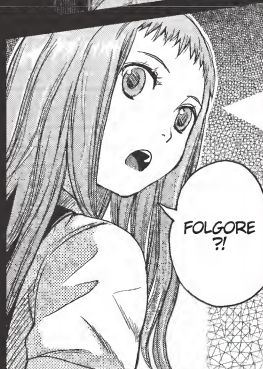
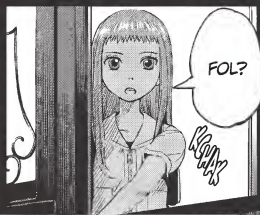
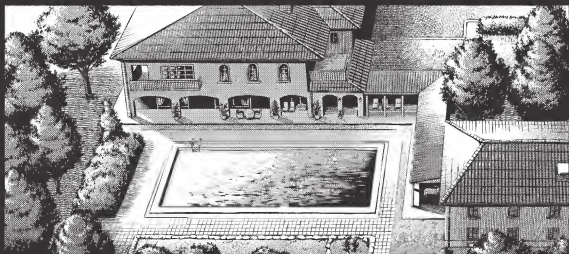


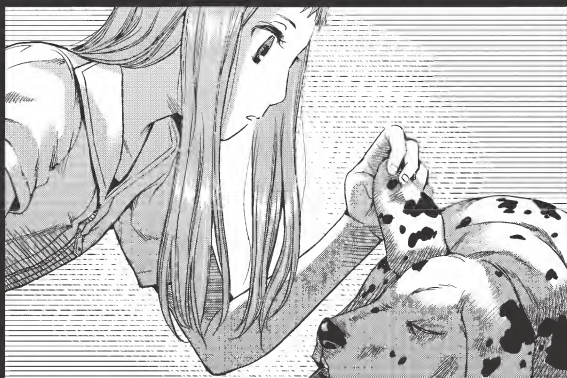
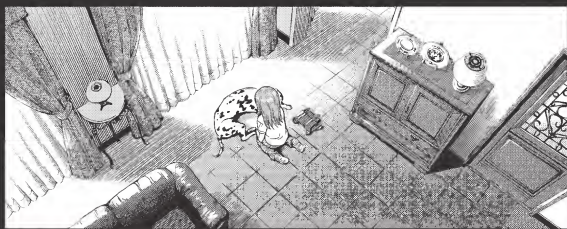




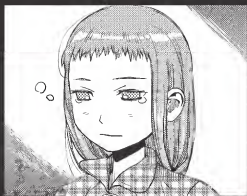


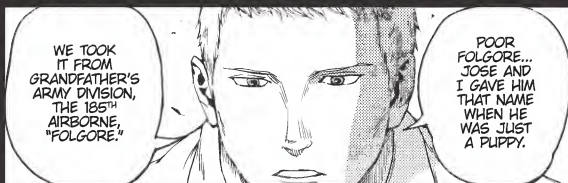
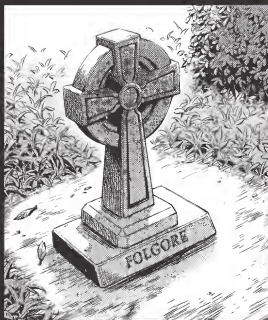
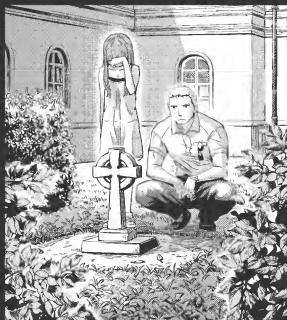


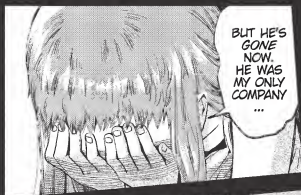








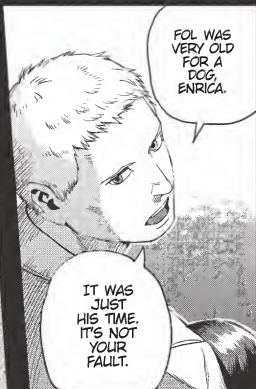




BUT HE'S
GONE
NOW.
HE WAS
MY ONLY
COMPANY
...

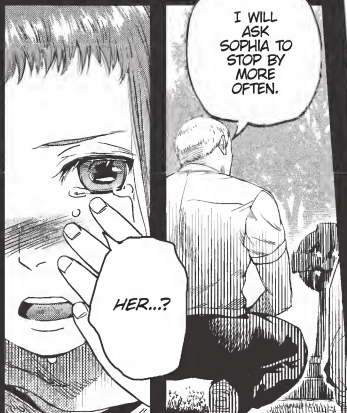


I DON'T
KNOW IF
I CAN KEEP
WAITING
AT HOME,
ALL BY
MYSELF.



FOL WAS
VERY OLD
FOR A
DOG,
ENRICA.

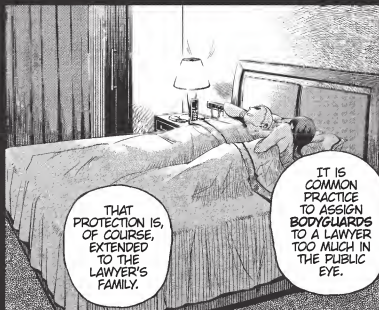
IT WAS
JUST
HIS TIME.
IT'S NOT
YOUR FAULT.



I WILL
ASK
SOPHIA TO
STOP BY
MORE
OFTEN.

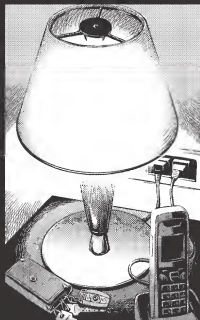






THAT
PROTECTION IS,
OF COURSE,
EXTENDED
TO THE
LAWYER'S
FAMILY.

IT IS
COMMON
PRACTICE
TO ASSIGN
BODYGUARDS
TO A LAWYER
TOO MUCH IN
THE PUBLIC
EYE.



BUT YOUR
FATHER
DOESN'T
WANT
ANYTHING
TO DO WITH
IT, HM?

RIGHT.



I CANNOT
LEAVE MY
SISTER ALONE
AT A TIME
LIKE THIS.
WATCH OVER
HER FOR ME,
WOULD
YOU?

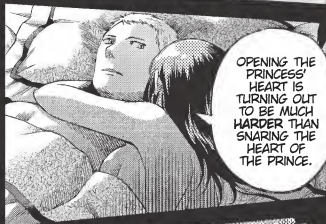


YOU KNOW
WHAT
PUBLIC
OPINION
IS LIKE,
RIGHT
NOW.

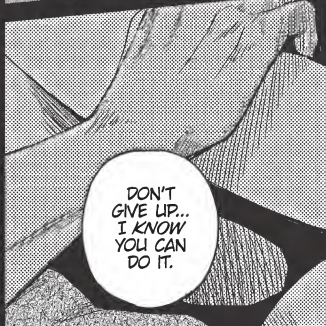


BUT I
DON'T
KNOW IF
I CAN
DO IT.

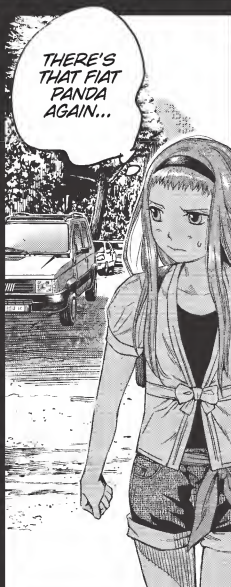
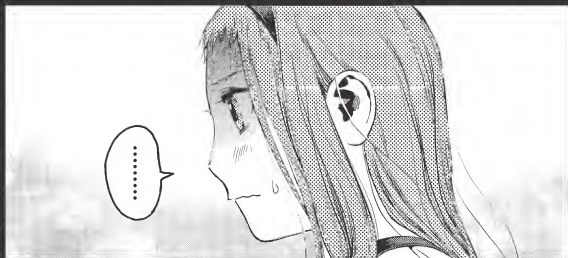
I...
I'LL
TRY.

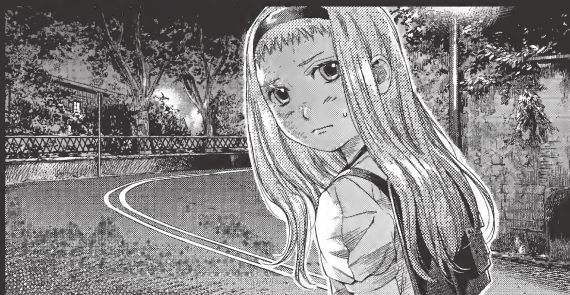
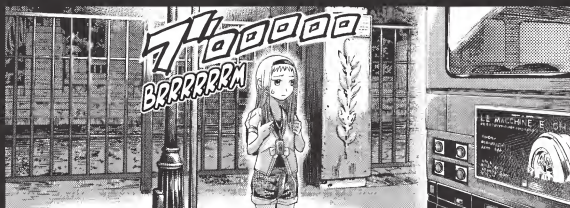


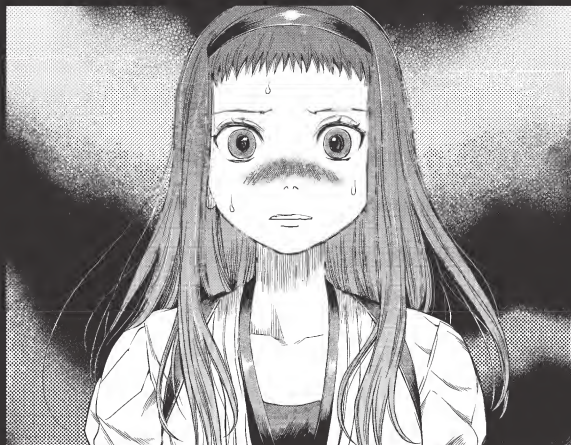
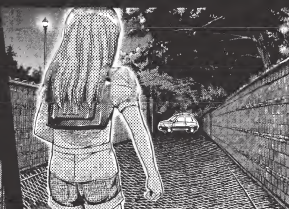
OPENING THE
PRINCESS'
HEART IS
TURNING OUT
TO BE MUCH
HARDER THAN
SNARING THE
HEART OF
THE PRINCE.

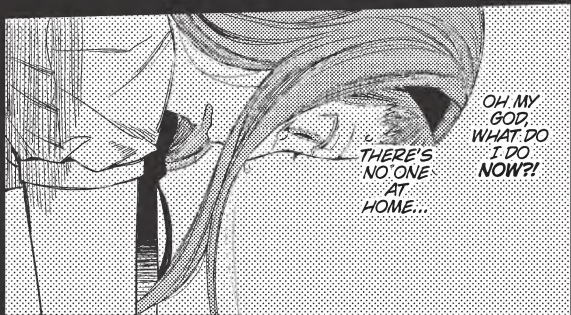
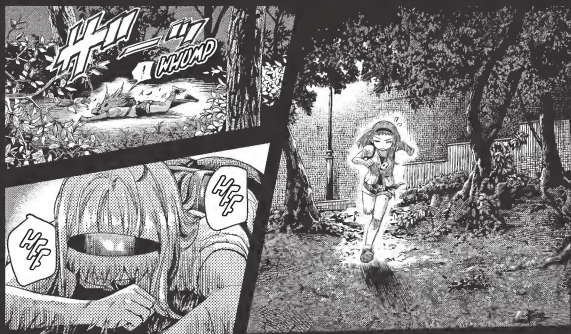
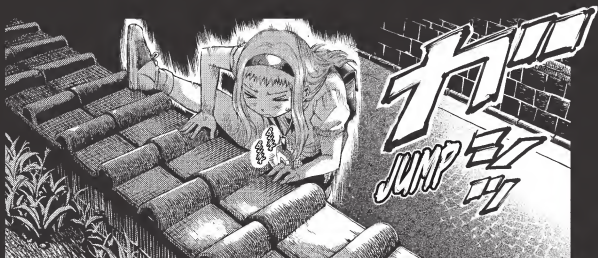


DON'T
GIVE UP...
I KNOW
YOU CAN
DO IT.



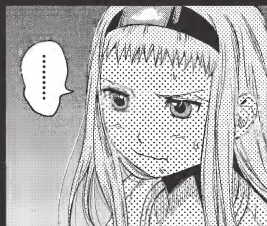


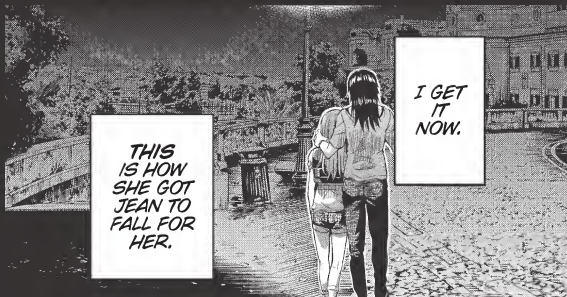
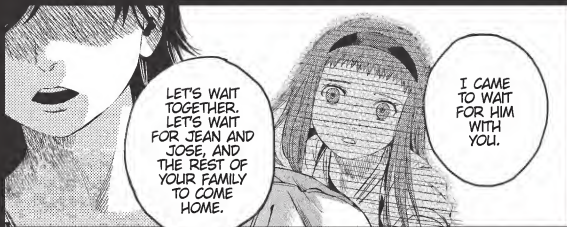














CHAPTER 70: THE CROCE INCIDENT (3)



MY
PART
ENDS
HERE.

THIS CASE
HOLDS THE FIRST
HALF OF YOUR
PAYMENT UP
FRONT, AS WELL
AS THE CAPITAL
TO ACQUIRE ANY
EQUIPMENT OR
SUPPLIES YOU
MAY NEED.



UNDER-
STOOD.

GOODBYE.
I DOUBT
WE WILL
SEE EACH
OTHER
AGAIN.

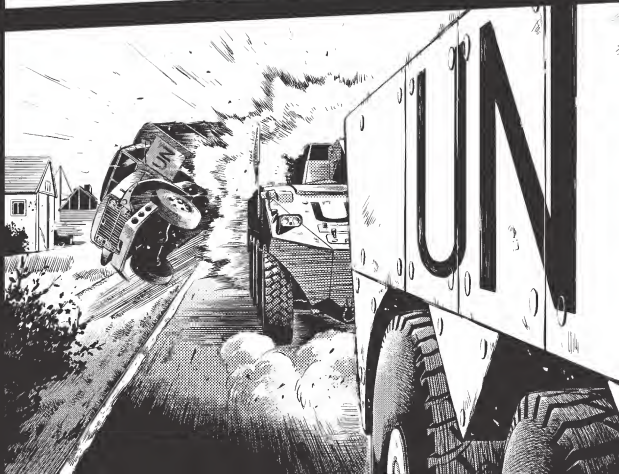


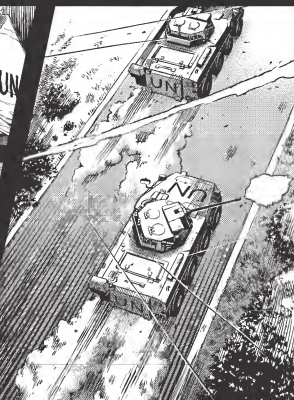
YOU WILL
SOON BE
CONTACTED BY
AARON CICERO,
ANOTHER
ONE OF OUR
MEMBERS.
HE HAS BEEN
ASSIGNED
AS YOUR
OBSERVER.

HOWEVER,
IF YOU
SCREW UP,
WE WILL NOT
ACKNOWLEDGE
ANY CONNEC-
TION TO YOU,
OR TO YOUR
ACTIONS.



TO
UNBIND
HUMAN-
ITY'S
HISTORY.







WE WERE
ABLE TO
PREDICT
WHAT THEY
WOULD DO,
SO WE SET
UP A DUMMY
TRUCK TO
FOOL THEM.

SIR,
THANK YOU,
SIR! THE
LIBERATION
ARMY'S
AMBUSHES
ALWAYS
FOLLOW THE
SAME PATTERN,
SIR.



THOUGH,
I MUST SAY
I FEEL SORRY
FOR THE
SERBIAN
SOLDIER WHO
DIED WHILE
DRIVING YOUR
DUMMY
TRUCK.

EXCELLENTLY
DONE. THANKS
TO THIS, THE
EXPEDITIONARY
ARMY SHOULD
BE ABLE TO
RESUME AIR
STRIKES.



LIEUTENANT.

I HAVE SOME
NEWS FOR YOU.
JUST A SHORT
WHILE AGO,
WE RECEIVED
ORDERS
TO SEND YOU
BACK TO
ITALY.



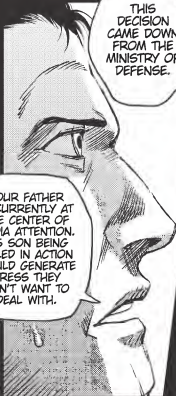
CAPTAIN.

YES,
I
KNOW...



POLITICS,
SIR.

I'M AFRAID
HE WAS AN
UNFORTUNATE,
BUT
NECESSARY
SACRIFICE.



THIS
DECISION
CAME DOWN
FROM THE
MINISTRY OF
DEFENSE.

YOUR FATHER
IS CURRENTLY AT
THE CENTER OF
MEDIA ATTENTION.
HIS SON BEING
KILLED IN ACTION
WOULD GENERATE
PRESS THEY
DON'T WANT TO
DEAL WITH.



.....

SIR,
I CANNOT
CONSENT
TO THIS!



SIR...?
BUT I
THOUGHT
MY TOUR OF
DUTY WAS
UNTIL THIS
WINTER.

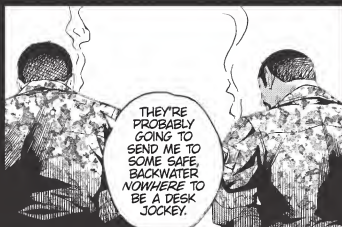


YOUR
FATHER IS
A WELL-
KNOWN
LAWYER.
IS HE
NOT?



OR WORSE,
YOU BECOME
A POW. THAT
COULD HAVE
HAPPENED
TODAY IF THE
ATTACK HAD
GONE AWRY.

LIKE YOU
SAID,
LIEUTENANT.
POLITICS.





I WAS
LOOKING
FORWARD
TO FOLLOWING
THE REGIMENT
ON TOURS TO THE
MIDDLE EAST,
OR EVEN
CENTRAL
ASIA.



THERE'S
FREEDOM
FOR ME
HERE.

I DON'T
HAVE TO WORRY
ABOUT MY
DAD'S JOB, OR
HAVING ALL
MY FAMILY'S
PROBLEMS
DUMPED ONTO ME.
THAT'S ALL FAR,
FAR AWAY
FROM HERE.



ROME - FIUMICINO AIRPORT



DO
AS YOU
THINK
YOU
MUST.

ALL
RIGHT, I
UNDER-
STAND...
I WAS
WRONG.



AN
APPROPRI-
ATE
SECURITY
PLAN
NEEDS TO
BE IMPE-
MENTED.

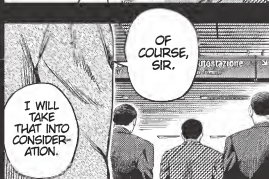
EXCELLENT.
I WILL NEED A
COMPREHEN-
SIVE ITINERARY
FOR YOUR
VACATION. AT
YOUR EARLIEST
CONVENIENCE.

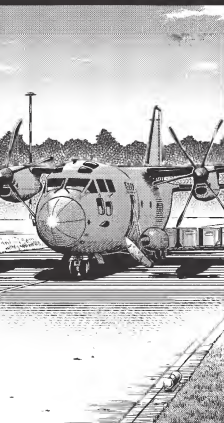
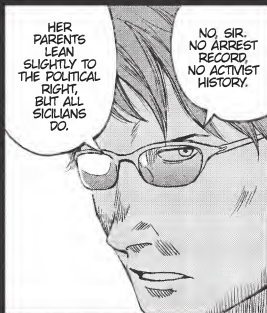
LORENZO PIERI
SISDE DOMESTIC COUNTER-
TERRORISM UNIT CHIEF

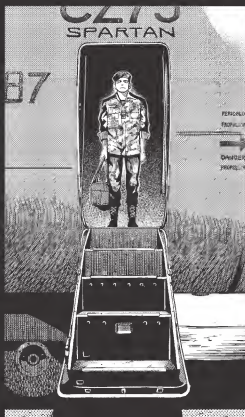
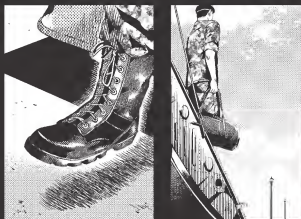
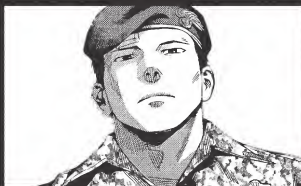


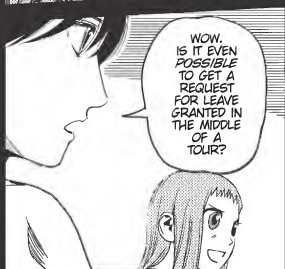
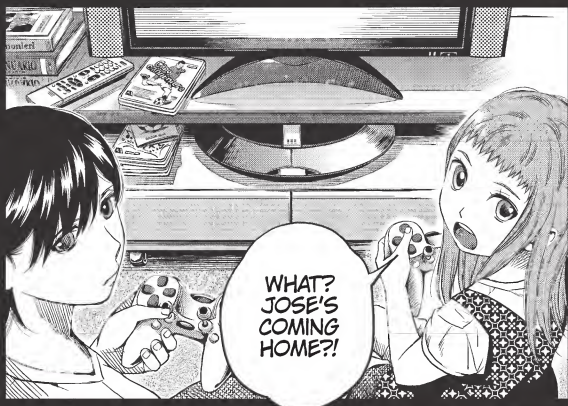
WITH ALL
DUE RESPECT,
SIR, YOU
AREN'T THE
ONLY TARGET.
THEY MAY GO
AFTER YOUR
FAMILY AS
WELL.

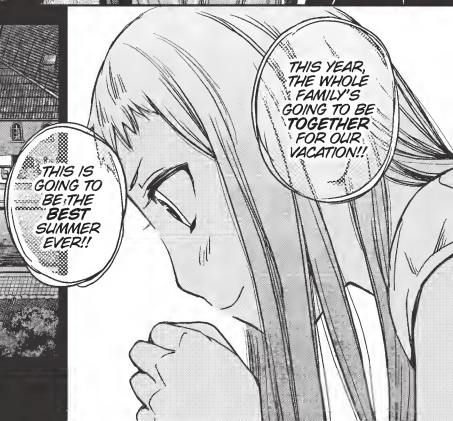
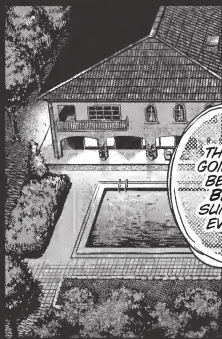
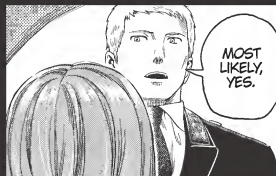
I WILL TAKE
THE LIBERTY
OF STATIONING
OFFICERS AT
YOUR HOME,
AROUND THE
CLOCK.

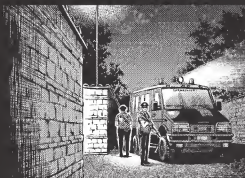




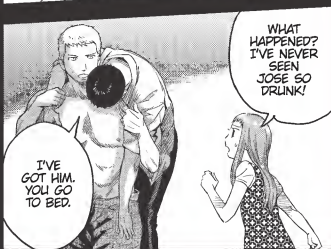
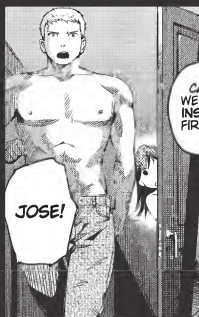














WHAT'S
WRONG?

IT'S NOT
LIKE YOU TO
COME HOME
WITHOUT
CALLING
FIRST,
JOSE.



I'M GONNA
RESIGN
FROM THE
CARABINIERI.

JEAN...



IT'S WHAT
EVERYBODY
WANTS ME
TO DO,
ISN'T IT?

JOSE...



I'M
LEAVIN'
THE
REST TO
YOU.

MY
DREAM
IS
DEAD...



BESIDES
...

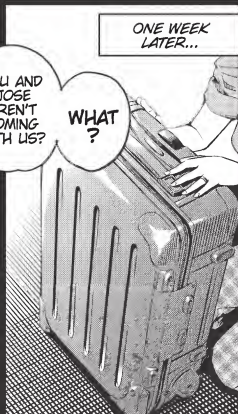
THAT'S
WHAT'S
BEST FOR
ENRICA
RIGHT?



WE HAVE
AN INTER-
VIEW
WITH THE
GENERAL
TODAY.



WHY
NOT?



ONE WEEK
LATER...

YOU AND
JOSE
AREN'T
COMING
WITH US?

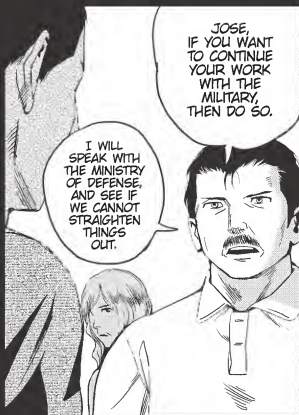
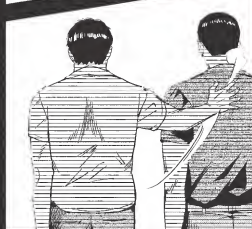
WHAT
?



WE'LL
CATCH UP
WITH YOU
TOMORROW.



THANKS,
DAD...



JOSE,
IF YOU WANT
TO CONTINUE
YOUR WORK
WITH THE
MILITARY,
THEN DO SO.

I WILL
SPEAK WITH
THE MINISTRY
OF DEFENSE,
AND SEE IF
WE CANNOT
STRAIGHTEN
THINGS
OUT.



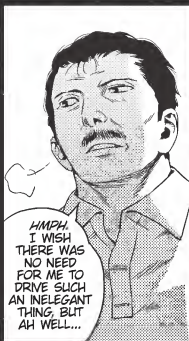
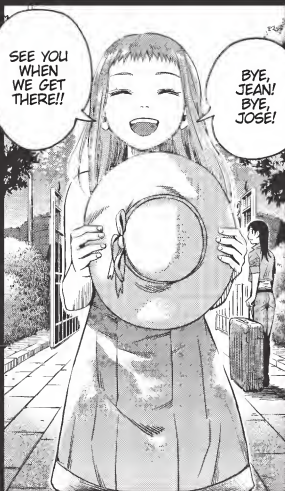
SEE YOU
WHEN
WE GET
THERE!!

BYE,
JEAN!
BYE,
JOSÉ!

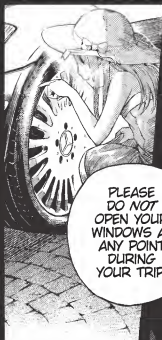


THIS
ISN'T THE
CAR WE
USUALLY
TAKE.

HM?



HMPH.
I WISH
THERE WAS
NO NEED
FOR ME TO
DRIVE SUCH
AN INELEGANT
THING, BUT
AH WELL...

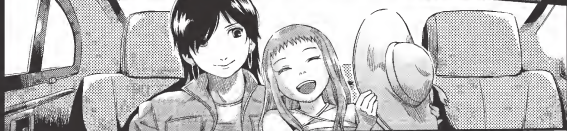
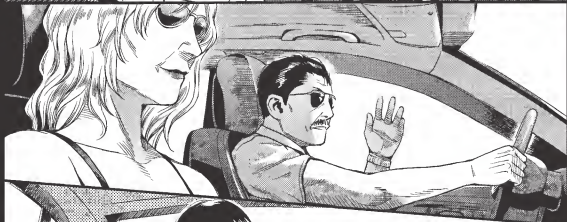


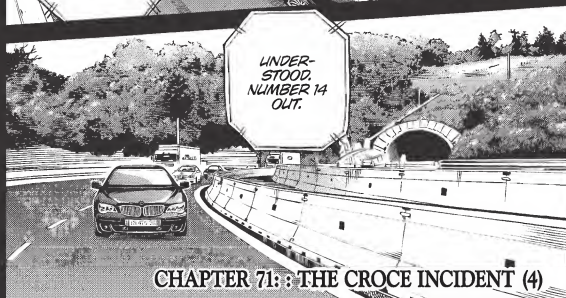
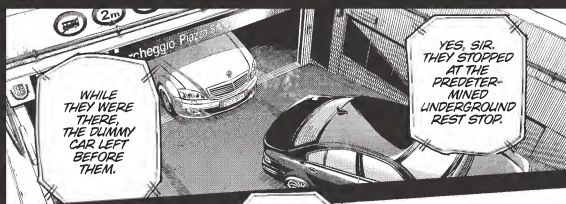
PLEASE
DO NOT
OPEN YOUR
WINDOWS AT
ANY POINT
DURING
YOUR TRIP.



THIS IS
THE HIGHEST-
QUALITY
ARMORED
CAR IN
EUROPE,
MA'AM.









OOPS!
Y-YES,
MA'AM.

SORRY,
MOM!



ENOUGH
HORSEING
AROUND,
YOU TWO!
PUT ON
YOUR SEAT
BELTS.



ENRICA
CERTAINLY IS
RAMBLING-
TIOUS
TODAY.

IT HAS
BEEN A
LONG TIME
SINCE
I'VE SEEN
HER SO
ENERGETIC.



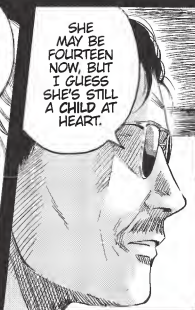
OH...
ER,
SO SHE
IS.

HONESTLY,
DEAR,
SOMEDAY YOU
SHOULD TURN
THAT PASSION
OF YOURS
TOWARDS
YOUR FAMILY.

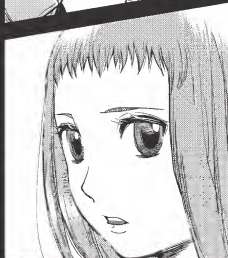
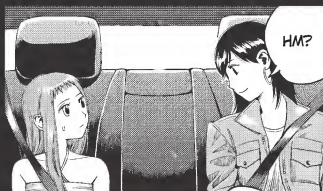


DEAR...

ENRICA
IS ONLY
THIR-
TEEN.

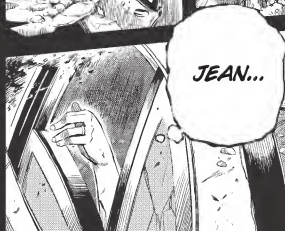


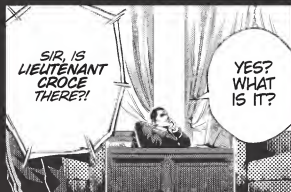
SHE
MAY BE
FOURTEEN
NOW, BUT
I GUESS
SHE'S STILL
A CHILD AT
HEART.



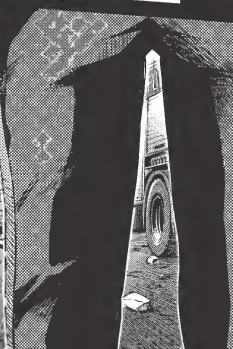
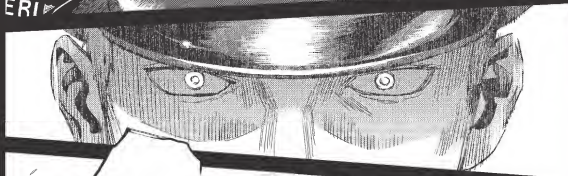


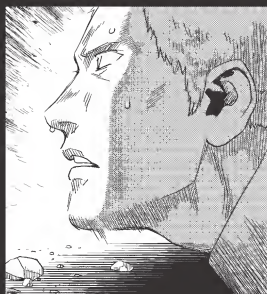
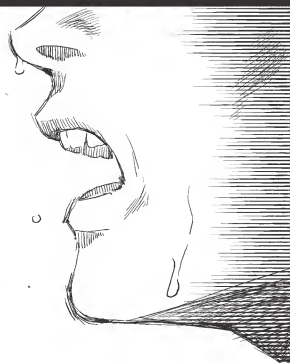
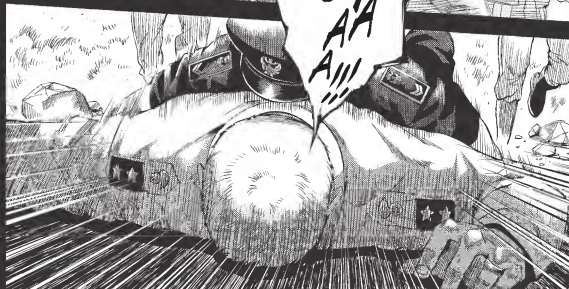
















AT APPROXIMATELY
10 O'CLOCK THIS
MORNING,
TERRORISTS BOMBED
THE HIGHWAY
BETWEEN ROME AND
NAPLES. ACCORDING
TO OUR SOURCES,
THIS WAS AN
ASSASSINATION
ATTEMPT.



THE TARGET
WAS MILAN
DISTRICT
COURT CHIEF
PROSECUTOR,
GIOVANNI
CROCE.



HE,
ALONG WITH
THREE FAMILY
MEMBERS AND
SIX MEMBERS
OF HIS POLICE
ESCORT, WERE
KILLED IN THE
BLAST.

TERRORISM



AT NOON,
TWO HOURS AFTER
THE BOMBING,
A RADICAL RIGHT
GROUP CALLING
ITSELF THE
"NORTHERN MILAN
ALLIANCE" POSTED
AN ANNOUNCEMENT
ON THE WORLD WIDE
WEB, CLAIMING
RESPONSIBILITY.

TV TERRORIST



AT NOON,
TWO HOURS AFTER
THE BOMBING,
A RADICAL RIGHT
GROUP CALLING
ITSELF THE
"NORTHERN MILAN
ALLIANCE" POSTED
AN ANNOUNCEMENT
ON THE WORLD WIDE
WEB, CLAIMING
RESPONSIBILITY.



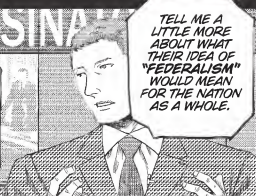
IN RECENT YEARS, MANY CITIZENS OF THE NORTH HAVE COME TO SUPPORT THIS AS THE ONLY SOLUTION TO NORTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC ISSUES.

IT ALL COMES BACK TO OUR NATION'S TRADITION OF STRONG REGIONAL TIES.

CRIME ASSASSINATI



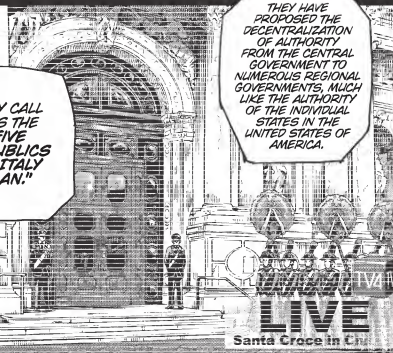
WELL, THEIR ULTIMATE GOAL IS FOR THE PADANIA RIVER VALLEY TO SECEDE FROM ITALY AND BECOME ITS OWN INDEPENDENT NATION. AS A FIRST STEP TOWARDS THAT...



TELL ME A LITTLE MORE ABOUT WHAT THEIR IDEA OF "FEDERALISM" WOULD MEAN FOR THE NATION AS A WHOLE.



THEY CALL THIS THE "FIVE REPUBLICS OF ITALY PLAN."



THEY HAVE PROPOSED THE DECENTRALIZATION OF AUTHORITY FROM THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO NUMEROUS REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS, MUCH LIKE THE AUTHORITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL STATES IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

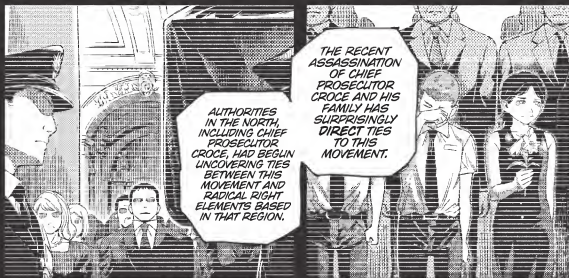
LIVE

Santa Croce in Chi



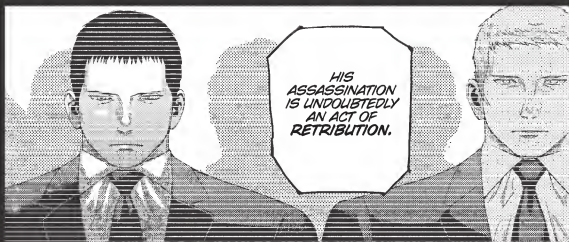
THESE ARE
THE FIVE
REGIONS,
THE FIVE NEW
"STATES,"
IF YOU WILL,
PROPOSED
BY THEIR
PLAN.

NORTHERN
ITALY,
CENTRAL
ITALY,
SOUTHERN
ITALY,
SICILY,
AND
SARDINIA...

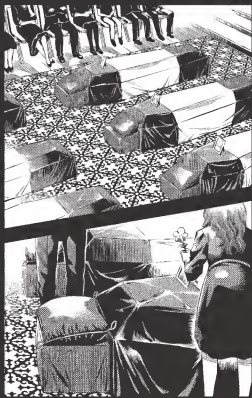


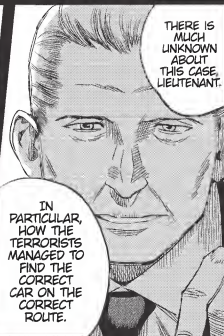
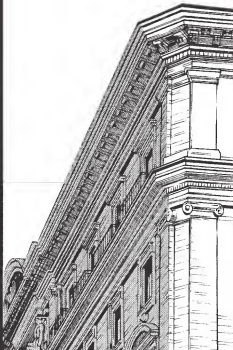
AUTHORITIES
IN THE NORTH,
INCLUDING CHIEF
PROSECUTOR
CROCE, HAD BEGUN
UNCOVERING TIES
BETWEEN THIS
MOVEMENT AND
RADICAL RIGHT
ELEMENTS BASED
IN THAT REGION.

THE RECENT
ASSASSINATION
OF CHIEF
PROSECUTOR
CROCE AND HIS
FAMILY HAS
SURPRISINGLY
DIRECT TIES
TO THIS
MOVEMENT.



HIS
ASSASSINATION
IS UNDOUBTEDLY
AN ACT OF
RETRIBUTION.



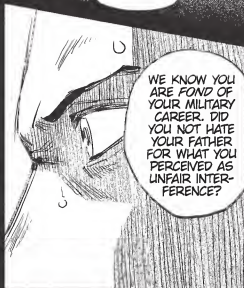
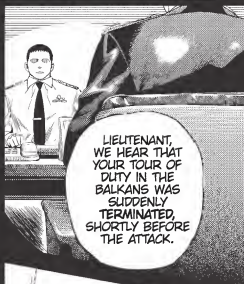




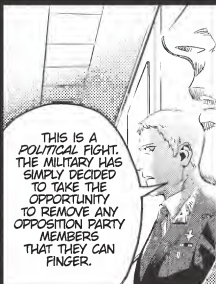
MAJOR GENERAL COLOMBO HAS BEEN KNOWN TO TAKE A MARKEDLY RIGHT-LEANING STANCE ON MANY ISSUES...



WE ASKED TO SPEAK WITH MAJOR GENERAL COLOMBO, AND THAT WAS THE DAY HE COULD SEE US.







THIS IS A
POLITICAL FIGHT.
THE MILITARY HAS
SIMPLY DECIDED
TO TAKE THE
OPPORTUNITY
TO REMOVE ANY
OPPOSITION PARTY
MEMBERS
THAT THEY CAN
FINGER.



THE
GENERALS
DON'T HAVE
ANY SERIOUS
DOUBTS
ABOUT HIM,
EITHER.



HE'S
INNO-
CENT.



THE RESULTS
OF THIS WILL
UNDOUBTEDLY
ECHO ACROSS
THE WHOLE
OF ITALY.

AND
THERE IS
AN
ELECTION
THIS
FALL...



GIVEN EVERY-
THING THAT
HAS HAPPENED,
NO ONE WOULD
BE SURPRISED
IF YOU FELT...
UNCOMFORTABLE
REMAINING WITH
THE ARMY.

SHOULD
THAT
HAPPEN,
CONTACT
ME.



WHO
ARE
YOU...?



I MAY BE
ABLE TO
PROVIDE
YOU WITH A
CHANCE FOR
REVENGE.

IF THE
CENTER-LEFT
WINS THE
ELECTION
THIS
FALL...



LIEUTEN-
ANT
CROCE,
CAN YOU
GIVE US A
COMMENT
?!

LIEUTEN-
ANT
CROCE!!

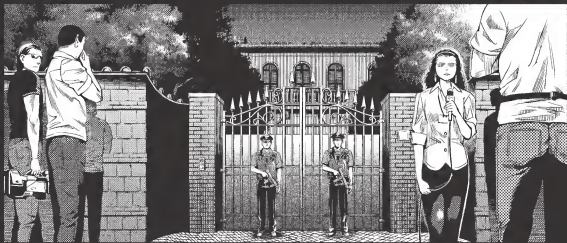


SIGNORE
JOSE!!

DO YOU DENY
THAT YOU HAVE
ANY AFFILIATION
WITH THE
RIGHT-WING
EXTREMIST
GROUP
RESPONSIBLE?!



LIEUTENANT,
IS IT TRUE
THAT YOU WERE
QUESTIONED BY
A MILITARY
TRIBUNAL?!

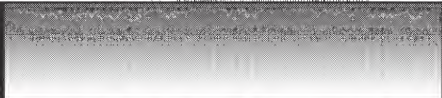
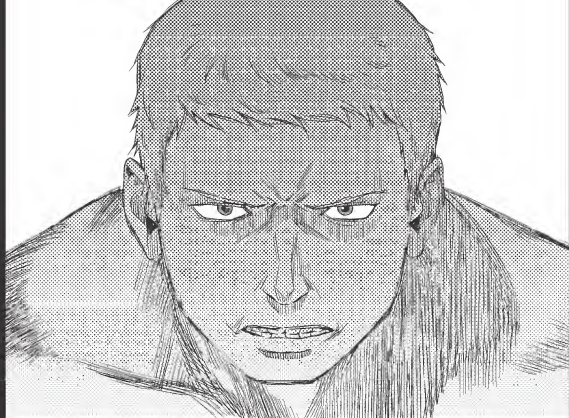


YOU CAN
KEEP YOUR
DREAM, WE
CAN HAVE OUR
RELATIONSHIP,
AND IT'LL ALL
WORK OUT!



YOUR
DREAM IS
TO BECOME
A GREAT
SOLDIER.

ONCE I'M
DISCHARGED,
I'M JUST A
REGULAR
CITIZEN. YOU
CAN PROTECT
ME ALL YOU
WANT. IT'LL BE
YOUR DUTY,
EVEN.



A close-up, black and white illustration of a man's face, shown in profile from the nose up. He has short, light-colored hair and a serious expression. Two speech bubbles are positioned around his head.

THE YOUNGER
THE BETTER,
FOR BOTH THE
IMPLANTS AND
THE DRUG-
INDUCED
BRAINWASHING.

THAT IS
WHAT THE
AGENCY'S
TECHS
SPECIFIED.

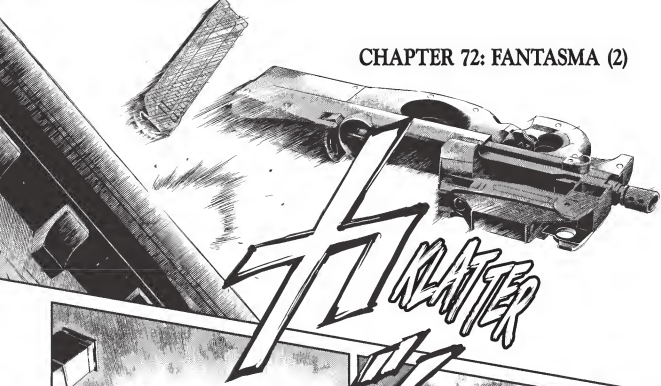
A black and white illustration of a man in a light-colored suit and dark tie standing in a doorway. He is looking down at a person on the floor. A speech bubble is to his left.

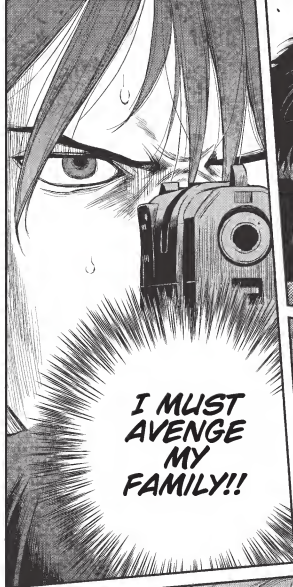
ONCE WE
DO THAT, WE
CAN FINALLY
BEGIN
EXTERMINATING
THE FIVE
REPUBLICS
FACTION.

A black and white illustration of a person lying on the floor, viewed from above. They are wearing a light-colored shirt. A speech bubble is to their right.

NOW, QUIT
STALLING
AND
CHOOSE
YOUR
PARTNER.

CHAPTER 72: FANTASMA (2)



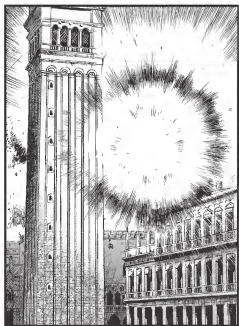


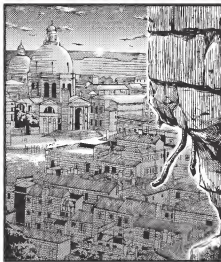
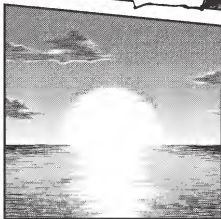
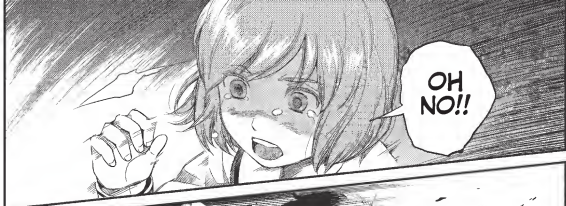
**I MUST
AVENGE
MY
FAMILY!!**



**GIACOMO'S
IN THERE!!**



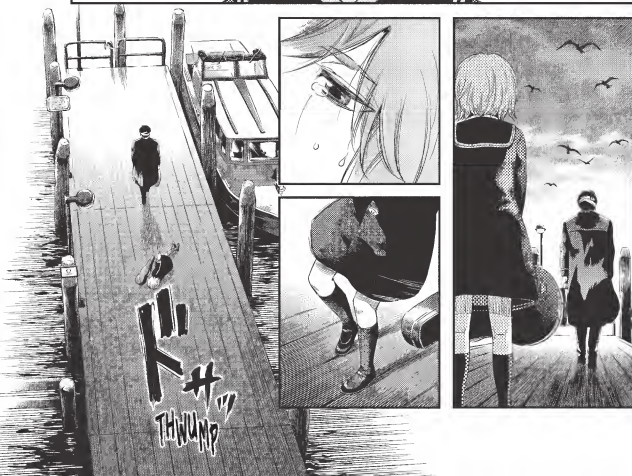
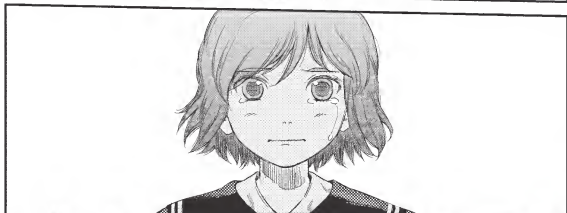


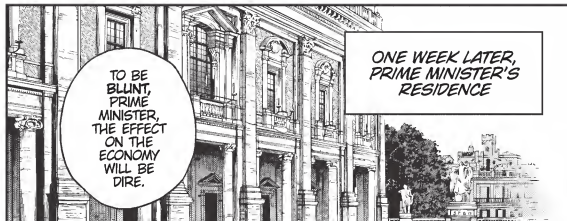




THE VENETIAN LOYALISTS WERE, IN THE END, JUST PAWNS.







TO BE
BLUNT,
PRIME
MINISTER,
THE EFFECT
ON THE
ECONOMY
WILL BE
DIRE.

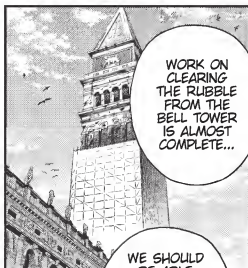
ONE WEEK LATER,
PRIME MINISTER'S
RESIDENCE



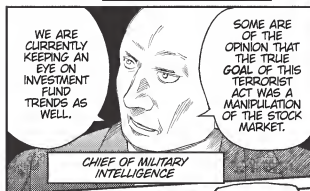
ALSO,
STOCK
PRICES
PLUMMETED
AFTER LAST
WEEK'S
EVENT, AND
THEY
CONTINUE
TO FALL.

HOWEVER,
TOURISM IN THE
AREA WILL LIKELY
REMAIN AT A
FRACTION OF ITS
NORMAL NUMBERS
FOR AT LEAST
THREE MONTHS,
IF NOT
LONGER.

SECRETARIAT OF THE
MINISTRY OF FINANCE



WORK ON
CLEARING THE
RUBBLE
FROM THE
BELL TOWER
IS ALMOST
COMPLETE...



WE ARE
CURRENTLY
KEEPING AN
EYE ON
INVESTMENT
FUND
TRENDS AS
WELL.

SOME ARE
OF THE
OPINION THAT
THE TRUE
GOAL OF THIS
TERRORIST
ACT WAS A
MANIPULATION
OF THE STOCK
MARKET.

CHIEF OF MILITARY
INTELLIGENCE

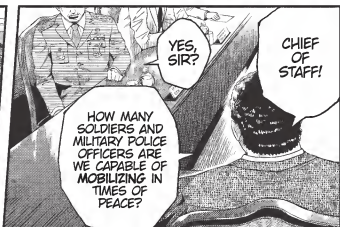


WE SHOULD
BE ABLE
TO REOPEN
ST MARK'S
SQUARE TO
THE PUBLIC BY
THE BEGINNING
OF NEXT
WEEK.



APPROVAL
RATINGS
OF THE
ADMINISTRATION
HAVE REMAINED
NEARLY
EVEN.

ONE PIECE OF
GOOD NEWS IS
THAT PUBLIC
OPINION AGREES
WITH THE
GOVERNMENT'S
STANCE ON
THIS ISSUE.





SOCIAL WELFARE AGENCY HQ

ANALYSIS OF THE EXPLOSIVE DEVICE USED IN VENICE HAS BEEN COMPLETED.





AND
IF THAT
HAPPENS,
WE WILL
BEAR THE
BRUNT OF
IT.

ARE WE
CAPABLE OF
HANDLING
THAT?



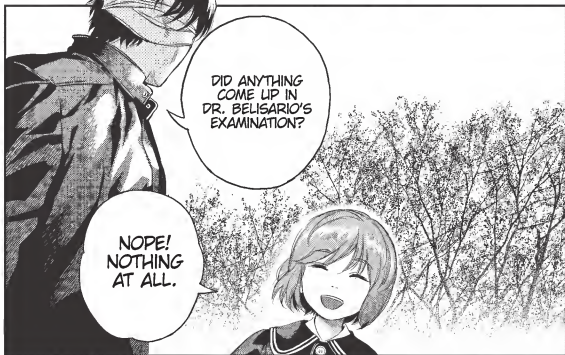
INCLUDING THE
AGENCY'S MAIN
HEADQUARTERS
AND BRANCH
OFFICES, WE
COULD MOBILIZE
APPROXIMATELY
A HUNDRED
AGENTS.

PEOPLE
BROUGHT
IN FROM
PUBLIC
SECURITY
MIGHT
DOUBLE
THAT
NUMBER.



CHRIST...
WE'D BETTER
HOPE THAT
WE DON'T GET
ATTACKED IN
TEN SEPARATE
LOCATIONS
AT ONCE.

THAT MAY
NOT SOUND
LIKE A LOT,
BUT IT
WOULD BE
ENOUGH TO
PARALYZE
THE
MILITARY.



DID ANYTHING
COME UP IN
DR. BELISARIO'S
EXAMINATION?

NOPE!
NOTHING
AT ALL.



EET!



AHH.



I JUST
TOOK A
LONG TIME
TO GET
CHANGED...

THAT'S
WHY I
WAS
LATE.

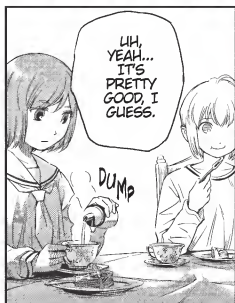
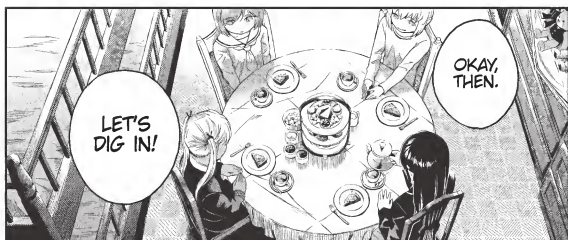


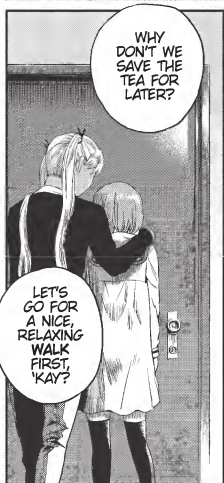
CAN YOU
FORGIVE
ME?

I'M SORRY
I SAID ALL
THOSE MEAN
THINGS IN
VENICE.



OF
COURSE!







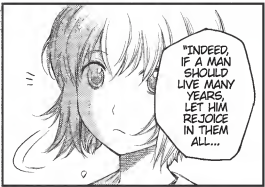
"AND LET HIM REMEMBER THE DAYS OF DARKNESS, FOR THEY WILL BE MANY."



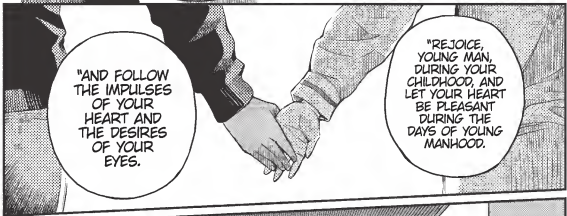
HENRI-ETTA...



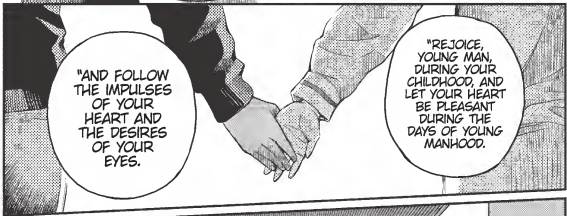
"EVERYTHING THAT IS TO COME WILL BE FUTILITY."



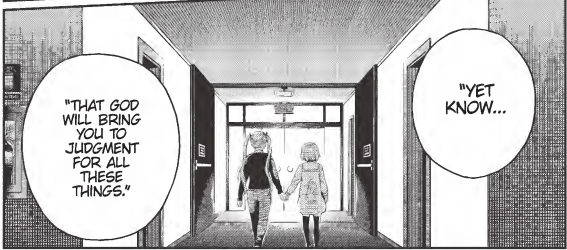
"INDEED, IF A MAN SHOULD LIVE MANY YEARS, LET HIM REJOICE IN THEM ALL...."



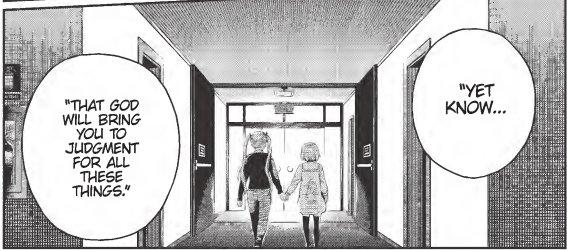
"AND FOLLOW THE IMPULSES OF YOUR HEART AND THE DESIRES OF YOUR EYES."



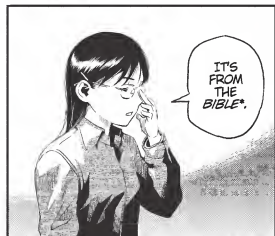
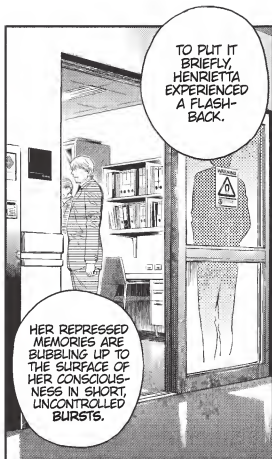
"REJOICE, YOUNG MAN, DURING YOUR CHILDHOOD, AND LET YOUR HEART BE PLEASANT DURING THE DAYS OF YOUNG MANHOOD."



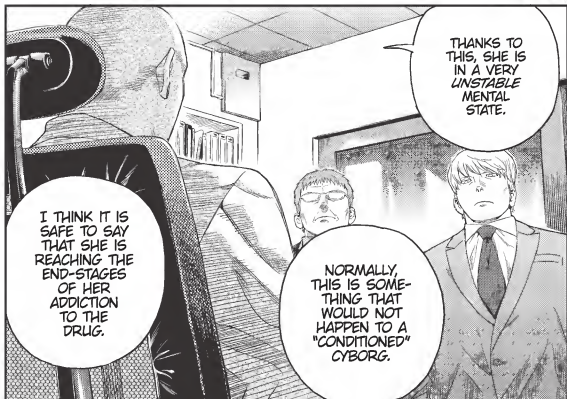
"THAT GOD WILL BRING YOU TO JUDGMENT FOR ALL THESE THINGS."



"YET KNOW..."



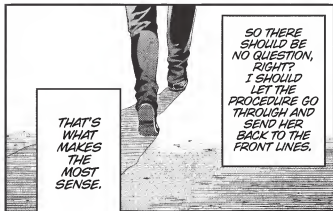
*Ecclesiastes 11:9-9





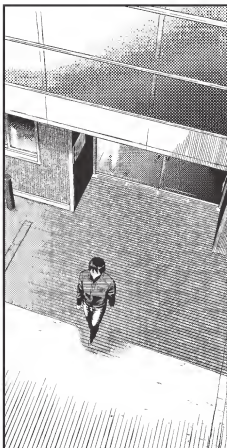


*HENRIETTA'S
REACHED THE END.
THE WAY THINGS
STAND NOW,
SHE'LL BE PUT IN
THE HOSPITAL TO
LIE AROUND AND
WAIT FOR DEATH.*



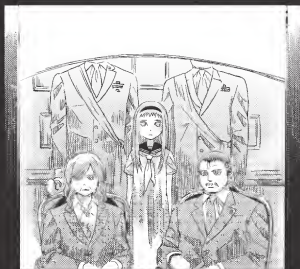
*THAT'S
WHAT
MAKES
THE
MOST
SENSE.*

*SO THERE
SHOULD BE
NO QUESTION,
RIGHT?
I SHOULD
LET THE
PROCEDURE GO
THROUGH AND
SEND HER
BACK TO THE
FRONT LINES.*



*IS THAT
WHAT I'M
SUPPOSED
TO DO?*

*BUT IS
THAT
WHAT'S
RIGHT
FOR
HER?*





GO
'WAY
AND
LEMMIE
BE.

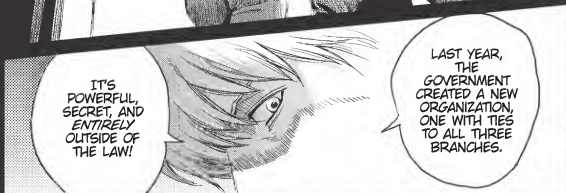


LEMMIE
GO,
JEAN...



NOW,
CLEAN
YOURSELF
UP!
WE'RE
GOING ON
A LITTLE
TRIP!!

NOT
ON
YOUR
LIFE!

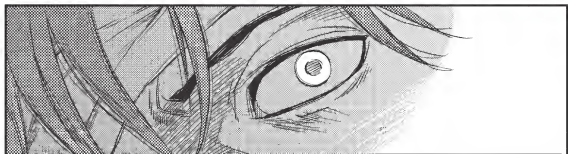


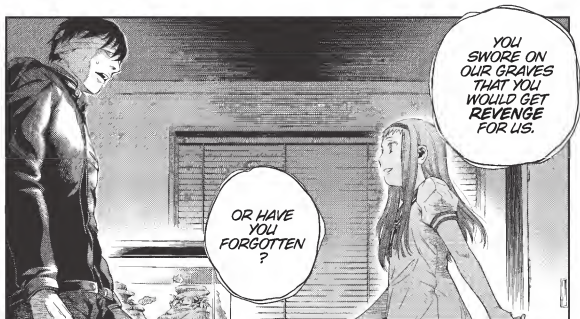
IT'S
POWERFUL,
SECRET, AND
ENTIRELY
OUTSIDE OF
THE LAW!

LAST YEAR,
THE
GOVERNMENT
CREATED A NEW
ORGANIZATION,
ONE WITH TIES
TO ALL THREE
BRANCHES.

GET ON
YOUR
FEET,
AND
FOLLOW
ME!!





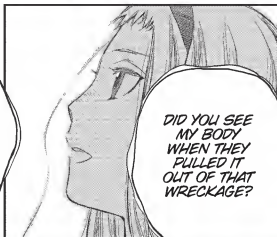


YOU
SWORE ON
OUR GRAVES
THAT YOU
WOULD GET
REVENGE
FOR US.

OR HAVE
YOU
FORGOTTEN
?



MY NECK
WAS
BROKEN...
IT HURT
A LOT.



DID YOU SEE
MY BODY
WHEN THEY
PULLED IT
OUT OF THAT
WRECKAGE?



IS SHE
MORE
IMPORTANT
TO YOU
THAN YOUR
OWN FAMILY
NOW?

DON'T
YOU
CARE
ANY-
MORE?



I WAS JUST TRYING TO HELP HER. HER, I HAD THE POWER TO SAVE!



MORE THAN YOUR OWN BABY SISTER?

DO YOU LOVE HENRIETTA MORE THAN ME?

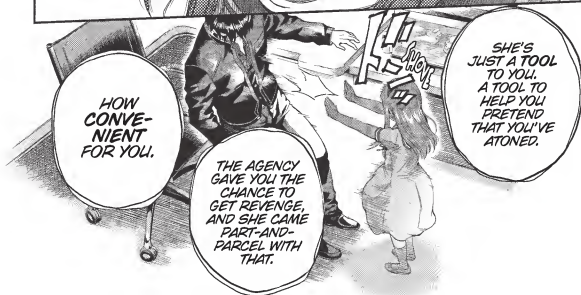


E-ENRICA, LISTEN!

I... I WAS JUST...



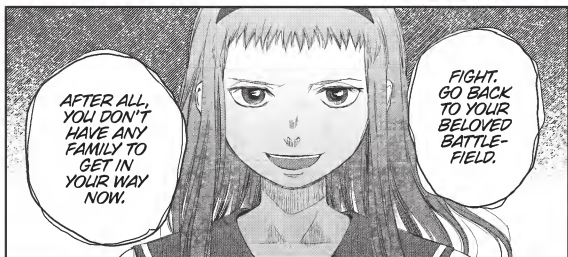
LIAR.

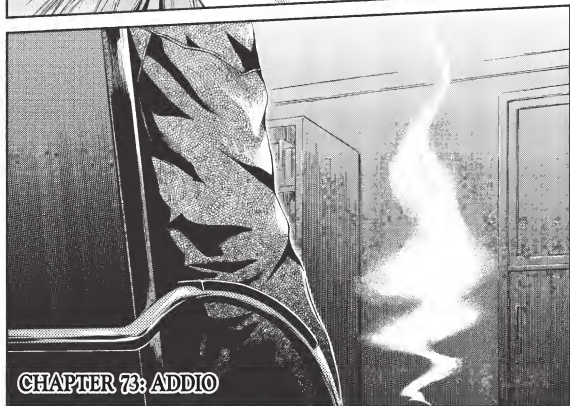
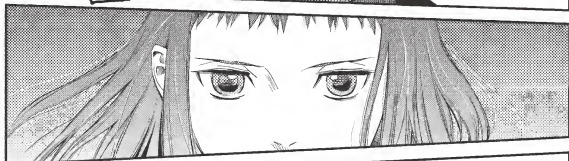


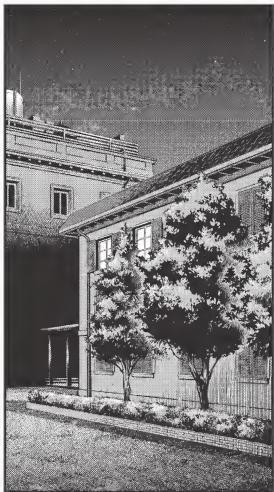
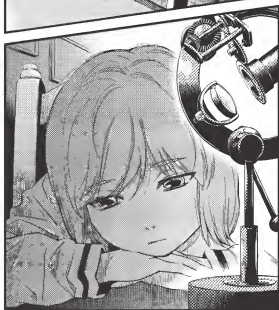
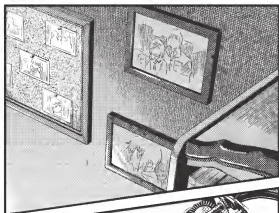
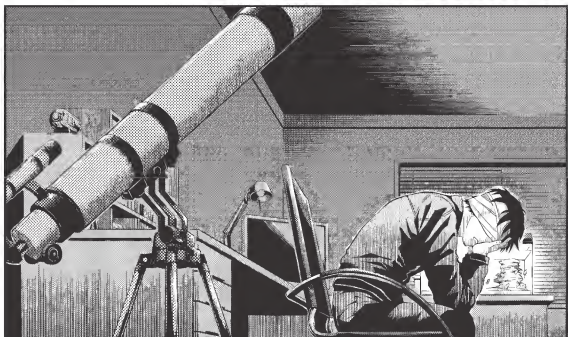
HOW CONVENIENT FOR YOU.

THE AGENCY GAVE YOU THE CHANCE TO GET REVENGE, AND SHE CAME PART-AND-PARCEL WITH THAT.

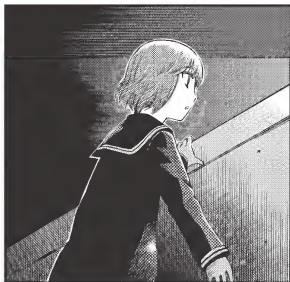
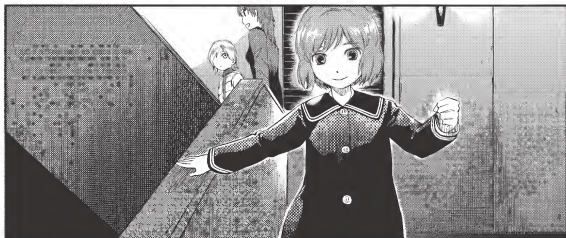
SHE'S JUST A TOOL TO YOU. A TOOL TO HELP YOU PRETEND THAT YOU'VE ATONED.

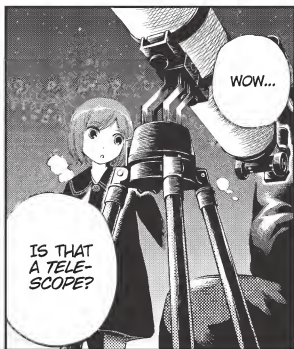














I
GUESS
SO...

HAVE YOU
FORGOTTEN
ALREADY?



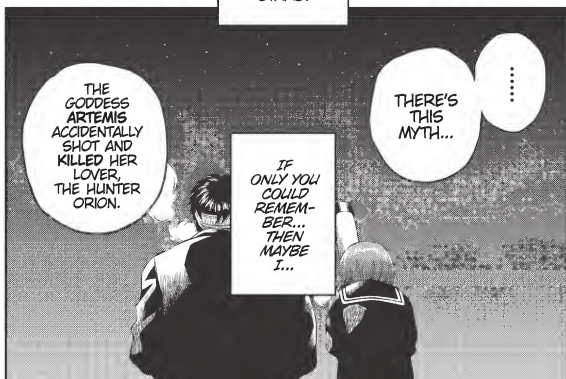
WHAT'S
WRONG?

YEAH.
IT'S A
CLEAR
NIGHT
OUT...

A
GREAT
NIGHT
FOR
WATCHING
THE
STARS.



IT'S ONLY
BEEN A
YEAR SINCE
WE LAST
LOOKED UP
AT THE
STARS.

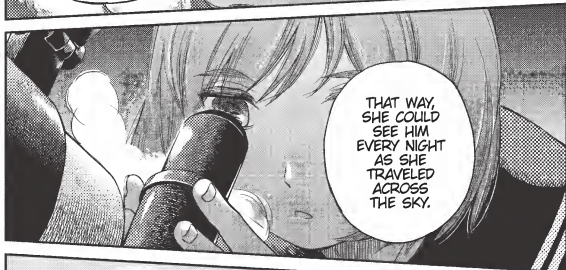


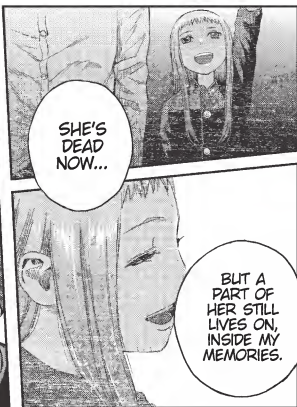
THE
GODDESS
ARTEMIS
ACCIDENTALLY
SHOT AND
KILLED HER
LOVER,
THE HUNTER
ORION.

IF
ONLY YOU
COULD
REMEM-
BER...
THEN
MAYBE
I...

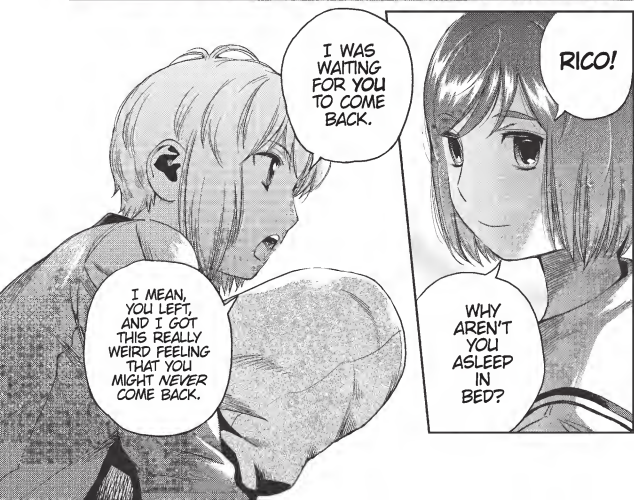
THERE'S
THIS
MYTH...

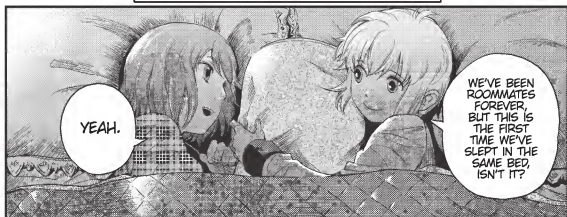
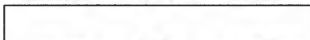
...

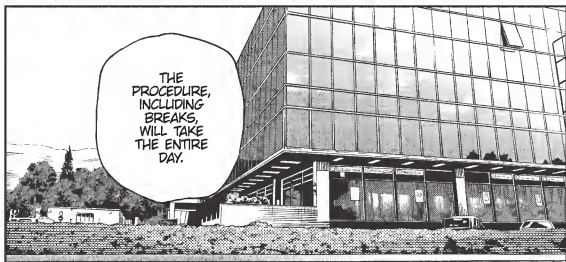




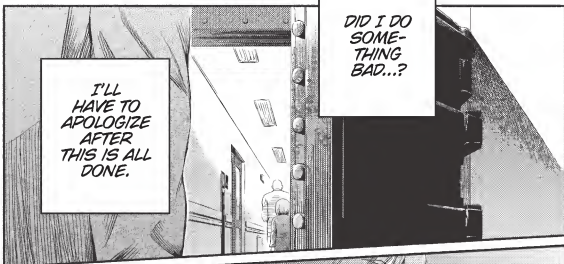






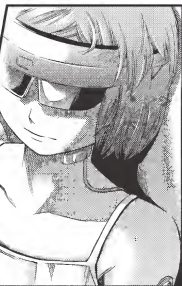




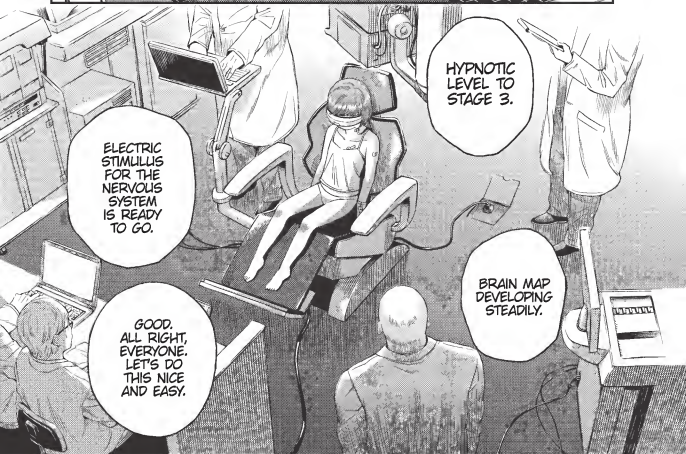




PE 150cc,
READY TO
ADMINISTER.



BEGIN.

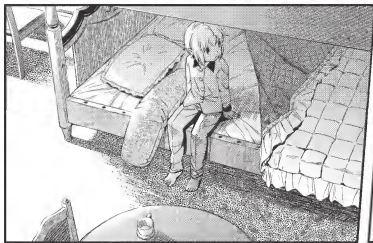
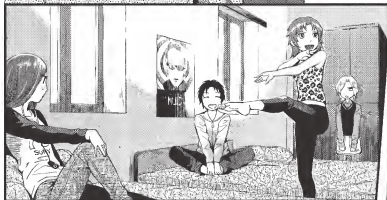
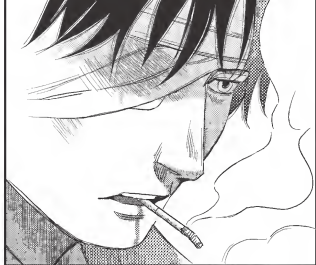


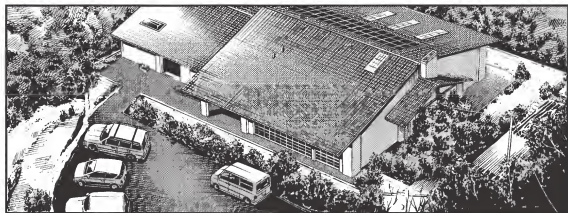
HYPNOTIC
LEVEL TO
STAGE 3.

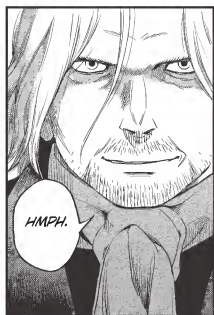
ELECTRIC
STIMULUS
FOR THE
NERVOUS
SYSTEM
IS READY
TO GO.

GOOD.
ALL RIGHT,
EVERYONE.
LET'S DO
THIS NICE
AND EASY.

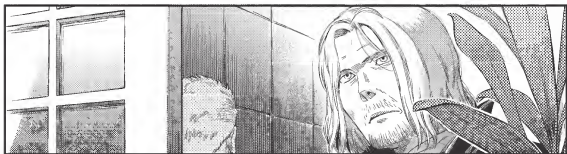
BRAIN MAP
DEVELOPING
STEADILY.













GIACOMO DANTE.

VRE!

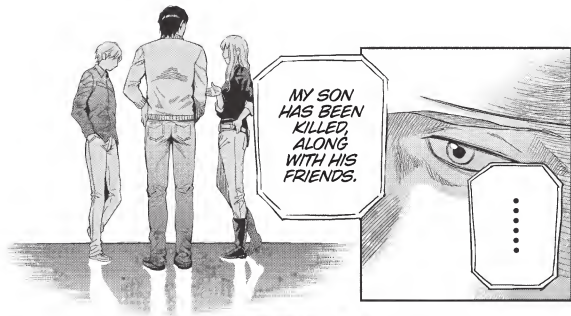
I AM
GLAD
YOU
CAME...

THAT'S
PRETTY
PATHETIC.

A
BCI*,
EH?

*A "brain-computer interface" is a direct pathway from the brain to a machine, allowing disabled people to speak.





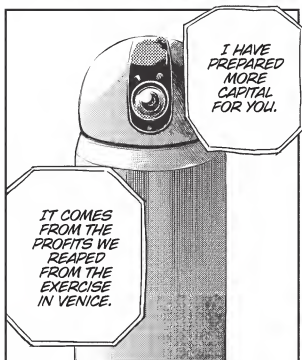
MY SON
HAS BEEN
KILLED,
ALONG
WITH HIS
FRIENDS.

...



I CAME
BECAUSE
THIS
SOUNDED
LIKE IT'D BE
A WHOLE
LOT OF
FUN.

AH, WELL....
I DIDN'T COME
HERE OUT
OF SOME
STUPID NEED
TO PAY YOU
BACK FOR
ALEXANDRIA.



I HAVE
PREPARED
MORE
CAPITAL
FOR YOU.

IT COMES
FROM THE
PROFITS WE
REAPED
FROM THE
EXERCISE
IN VENICE.



BUT,
Y'KNOW...
I HAVE
SOME
RESPECT
FOR THE
WAY YOU'VE
LIVED YOUR
LIFE.

SO,
I'LL TAKE
ON THIS
LITTLE
GRUDGE
OF
YOURS.



GUNSLINGERGIRL.



The Locations Of “GUNSLINGER GIRL”

ROMA	#67,69,70,71,72,73
MILANO	#67,68
VENEZIA	#72
ALEXANDRIA	#68
PREŠEVO VALLEY	#69,70

The World of Gunslinger Girl

■ The Queen of the Adriatic & the City in the Center of History

It is believed that the city of Venice was first founded in the 5th century by Roman refugees, fleeing the pillaging of Germanic tribes. Two centuries later, in the 7th century, the Republic of Venice was born. Venice flourished during the Middle Ages as a key trading city on the Mediterranean Sea.

However, once the Age of Exploration began, trading routes shifted to focus on the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, and Venice's prosperity began to wane. By the 18th century, it had weakened considerably, falling to Napoleon's conquest in 1797, and over 1,000 years of independent rule came to an end. Control of Venice was passed back and forth between Austria and the Kingdom of Italy for several decades before a revolt restored Venice's independence in 1849. However, that independence did not last long. Another revolt in 1866 brought Venice back under the control of the Kingdom of Italy, and it has remained a part of that country to this day.

One of the major conflicts presented in this work is the friction between the North and the South. Venice is part of the North. Its present-day economy is quite strong, due to the booming tourism trade. Thanks to the aforementioned friction and the city's pride in its history, the voices calling for the city's independence as the Republic of Venice are stronger than ever.

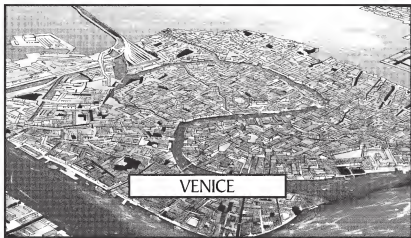
VENICE

■ The City of Water: Venice's Unique Geography

Located at the northern end of the Adriatic Sea, Venice is actually spread out across over 100 islands. Listed as a World Heritage Site, the city of Venice and its beautiful surrounding lagoon is the most popular tourist spot in all of Italy. It is best known for the numerous canals and bridges that crisscross the main island. Because of these bridges and canals, it is not permitted to drive cars inside the city. Most people get about by *gondola*, Venice's famous boat. The canals and sidewalks of the city are labyrinthine, and it is very easy to get lost. However, no matter how lost you become, all the roads are designed to eventually lead you to St Mark's Square.

■ The Death of Venice: The Sinking City

The main island of Venice is actually an artificially-drained section of the lagoon. As was brought up in this work, the city is routinely hit by a phenomenon called *acqua alta*, or high water. During the fall and winter, these extreme high tides will repeatedly flood the city. *Acqua alta* is caused by a complex interaction between normally stronger tides and seasonal winds. It is believed that a rising sea level due to global warming has had a hand in making them worse in recent years. Combined with structural problems in many of the oldest buildings in Venice, which were built on pillars, the city is facing a real threat of sinking into the sea.



The Venetian government began tackling this problem in the 1970s, proposing the MOSE Project (*Modulo Sperimentale Elettromeccanico*), a system of automatic gates designed to close off the Venetian Lagoon from the Adriatic Sea when the tide rises high enough. However, the project has faced stiff resistance from environmentalists since its inception, thus slowing its progress to a crawl. To this day, this beautiful World Heritage Site is still debating between saving itself with the use of gates, or to save the unique and gorgeous habitat of the lagoon.

↑ An overhead view of the main island of Venice. The large river flowing through it is the Grand Canal.

The World of Gunslinger Girl

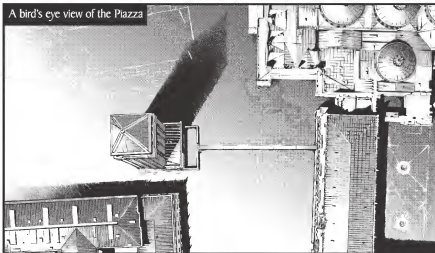
St Mark's Square (Piazza San Marco in Italian) is the heart of Venice, and one of the must-see spots of Italy. In this work, the Piazza is not only submerged by the *acqua alta*, but it is also cordoned off as a battleground-to-be, leaving it empty. However, in real life, it is always teeming with people.

Important historical buildings surround the Piazza on all four sides: St Mark's Basilica, with its impressive golden mosaics, and the intricately carved arches of the Doge's Palace. The huge sculpture of Archangel Gabriel sits atop its bell tower, and the famous Clock Tower. All of these and more decorate what is called the most beautiful square in the world. If a tourist wanted to take in all the sights of the Piazza, it would take an entire day or more. Of course, the casual tourist could thoroughly enjoy the Piazza simply by sipping tea at one of its many cafes, and feeding the pigeons. All in all, the Piazza is a place of unparalleled beauty and elegance.

ST MARK'S SQUARE

→ A bird's eye view of the Piazza

The building slightly left of center is the bell tower, in which the terrorists barricaded themselves. Left of the tower is the edge of the Piazza. Below the center is the edge of the Piazza which faces the sea.



In this work, the Piazza is unfortunately at the center of a bloody and destructive conflict. But if I ever have the chance to visit Italy, this is the one place I would make sure to see.

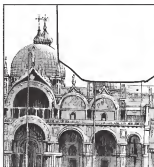


■ The Clock Tower

Situated to the left of St Mark's Basilica, the Clock Tower's roof is decorated by a large bell with two bronze statues, called "the Moors," on either side. Rico was hiding under them.

■ St Mark's Basilica

In the upper-right corner of the picture above, it is a marvel of Byzantine architecture. Its many marble mosaics are a must-see.



Major Tourist Spots in the Piazza



■ The Bell Tower

The tower on the left of this picture. Its red-brick construction is striking. An elevator carries tourists to the observation deck, where they can overlook the city and the lagoon.

■ The Doge's Palace

The building on the right of this picture was originally the seat of the Venetian government. In this work, the GIS is stationed in one of its first floor hallways.

The World of Gunslinger Girl

ITALY'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

Italy's educational system is very different from the American public school system on a number of points. Here is a look at it, grade by grade.

■ Nursery School - Asilo Nido (0-2 years)

Mostly run by cities and towns, the cost of sending a child to nursery school depends upon the parents' incomes. Many households where both parents work send their children there.

■ Preschool - Scuola Materna (3-5 years)

Most preschools are run by the state, at no tuition cost. In the US, there can be many differences between preschools, depending on who is running them. Italian preschools are mostly uniform, with divisions between ages.

■ Elementary School - Scuola Elementar (6-10 years)

Elementary school is the beginning of compulsory education in Italy. Unlike many US schools where students attend for six years, it is only for five years in Italy. Another difference is that students will have the same teacher for all five of those years.

■ Middle School - Scuola Media (11-13 years)

Italian middle school is three years long, not two years as in Canada and the US, and it marks the end of compulsory education. At the end of their last year, students have a final exam. Those that pass are given a diploma that qualifies them to enter high school.

■ High School (14-18 years)

Italian high schools generally fall under one of two broad categories: Academic or Trade.

○ Academic High Schools - Liceo

These schools are like most American high schools. Most graduates move on to college afterwards. Academic high schools generally specialize in one of 8 different fields:

- Literature
- Linguistics
- Arts
- Performing Arts
- Sciences
- Humanities
- Business
- Engineering

○ Trade Schools - Istituto

Most students who don't intend to go on to college wind up attending a trade school. There are two major types:

- Industrial Trade Schools
- Job-Specific Schools

Industrial Trade Schools are sometimes called Practical Sciences Schools, as the students learn the sciences behind many common industrial techniques. Job-Specific schools, as the name implies, focus on teaching skillsets for specific jobs, such as tailoring or cooking. This type of high school does not exist in Canada and the US, but this type of training can be found in specialized schools at the college level.

Upon finishing high school, all students face a comprehensive exam called the "maturita," a nationwide exam. Passing this test not only means successfully graduating high school, it also qualifies most graduates to attend college, similar to the American SAT test.

→ In Italy, students start to pick their college or university at age 14, choosing whether or not to attend specialized high schools and colleges.



■ College - Università (19 years and up)

Italy has very few private colleges, so most students attend a public university, as is the norm in Canada and the US. Entering college is very easy, but the qualifications for graduation are quite strict, leading to an overall high drop-out rate.

The World of Gunslinger Girl

THE CARABINIERI

■ Carabinieri versus the Police

In the US, all law enforcement is carried out by the police, on varying levels of local jurisdiction. The equivalent entity in Italy is generally called the State Police, as it falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior. The Carabinieri is a different entity entirely, under the command of the Ministry of Defense. More along the lines of a military police unit, the Carabinieri is considered a fourth branch of the Italian military, alongside the Army, Navy and Air Force. All Carabinieri personnel are trained soldiers, but they are also police officers, giving the organization a unique, double-sided nature.

■ History

The Carabinieri was first created in 1814 as a military police unit in the Kingdom of Sardegna called the *Corpo dei Carabinieri Reali*. The name "Carabinieri" comes from the unit's standard-issue weapon, the carbine rifle. From its inception to the present day, the Carabinieri has always been an elite organization, comprised of only the best soldiers.

■ Composition

The Carabinieri has units stationed at over 5300 places, nationwide. Most are stationed in local areas and charged with keeping the peace, though there are specialized divisions, such as riot police, and others that serve as full-time soldiers. These specialized divisions have even further divisions into elite units, such as Jean and Jose's 1st Parachute Regiment, or the GIS. There are presently around 120,000 Carabinieri soldiers.

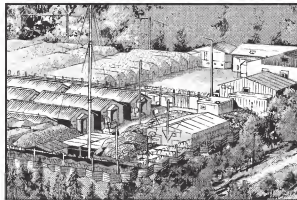
■ Missions

Being a dual police/military organization, Carabinieri missions are generally of either a police or military nature.

○ Military Missions

Carabinieri soldiers can be deployed on diverse missions, such as domestic or international military maneuvers, international peacekeeping missions, or as bodyguards for VIPs. They also police the other three main branches of the military.

- ☆ The GIS, a special task force, can be assigned to difficult missions, such as counter-terrorism or hostage-rescue, both inside and outside of Italy. NOCS, the equivalent unit in the purely civilian State Police, only has the jurisdiction to operate within the country's borders.



○ Policing Missions

Along with the State Police, the Carabinieri can be mobilized in matters of public safety or disaster relief.

All in all, the Carabinieri is a very unique organization with two distinct sides. It is a unit comprised of the very best of the best, and Jean was hand-picked to be one of its future commanders.

↑ Even among the elite Carabinieri, the 1st Parachute Regiment is a unit made up of the cream of the crop. Is it any wonder Jean was called the "Principe Azzurro"?

The World of Gunslinger Girl

While not very broad, Italy is very long, from north to south. The cultures and climates of these two regions are so different that it makes it hard to decide where to visit first! Having to choose where to visit first may be a "dilemma" for travelers, but Italy has had far more serious issues between the North and the South. Let me explain a little about the national problem that features so prominently in this work.

ITALY'S
NORTH/
SOUTH
DILEMMA

■ Wealthy North, Poor South

To find the origin of the North/South dilemma, one must go back to the year 1861, when Italy was first unified as a country. Before then, the area was comprised of a multitude of independent city-states, each with its own culture and traditions. Present-day Italians' passion for things such as their local football teams, regional pizza styles, and a general disdain for anything from other communities can be traced back to this.

When Italy first became a nation, the South already had problems with poverty. The unification compounded this, as the central government levied taxes and conscripted labor at the same rate in the South as it did in the wealthier North. With its scant funding taxed, and its young workforce conscripted, the South found itself in a steadily worsening situation. This economic gap between the North and the South persists even to the present day. The North was already well-developed industrially, so they only got wealthier. However, the economy of the South, comprised mostly of small-scale farming, has hardly improved over the years.

In modern times, many young Northerners have begun speaking out, wondering why the North must constantly support the South. Current national taxes are much higher in the North than they are in the South, leading some Northerners to feel like they're paying more than their fair share. Usually, times of prosperity for the country tend to quell these voices, but when the economy is struggling, they typically grow much louder. This can lead to the creation of factions in support of federalism, or on the more extreme end, a complete secession from Italy.

A true solution to this problem has yet to be found, but the digital era has brought a ray of hope to the South, where bustling IT centers are helping to improve its economic outlook. The incredible unemployment rate of the South, usually at 4 times that of the North, has dropped down to only three times. Should an answer ever be found, and the differences between Northern and Southern culture be reconciled, then perhaps Italy will become a unified country in truth.

■ Where to Eat, North or South?

Okay, enough with the grim tales of economic woe! Let us explore the different food cultures of the two regions. Cooking in Northern Italy is heavily influenced by its close neighbor, France. In particular, Northern dishes tend to use more butter and meat. Milanese pork cutlets is a recipe well-known around the world. The South, however, has much more of what foreigners would consider "typical Italian" cooking, using lots of tomatoes and olive oil.



↑ During elections, posters and billboards like this are quite common.

So the radical differences between North and South extend even into the kitchen. Enrica may have seemed rather dismissive of the Sicilian crust on Sophia's pizza, but in Italy's passionate region-centric mindset, that is an understandable response.

The World of Gunslinger Girl

■ No Water at the Table?!

When a person goes to a restaurant, the server will seat them and usually pour a glass of water for the customer. This is a common dining courtesy in many countries around the world. However, Italy is a little different. The server will seat the patron and bring them a menu, but no water. Instead, water must be ordered like any other menu item. It will not typically be free, but what is brought to you will not be mere tap water. Instead, mineral water is served. Common options at most restaurants are *gassata* (sparkling water) or *naturale* (non-carbonated water). Some high-end restaurants may have "water lists," akin to wine lists! Also, like wine, many Italians have discerning tastes for which water they prefer to drink.

ITALY'S
WATER

■ The Wide Variety of Italian Water

Not only are Northern and Southern cultures different, but the terrains of those two regions are also vastly different. This leads to different flavors of spring waters found in those areas. Like local wines or beer microbrews, Italy has local specialty waters. Here are some deep spring water brands from the regions that have appeared in this work.

○ *San Pellegrino*

This water comes from the Lombardia region, where Milan is located. Mineral-rich, it is touted as good for the digestive tract. This brand can be found easily in the US and Canada.

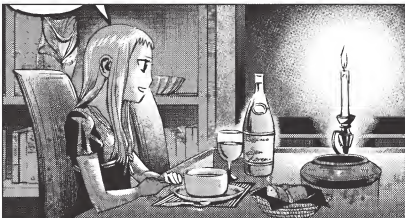
○ *San Benedetto*

You can find this brand of water in Veneto Province, home of Venice, where the vicious battle for the bell tower took place. It is the highest-selling brand in Italy. A soft water, it has a very mellow taste to it, making it easy to drink.

○ *Mangiatorella*

Calabria Province, where the Carabinieri 1st Parachute Regiment is based, is where this particular brand is located. It is said to have a detoxifying effect, so many hospitals serve this water.

All three of these brands can be found worldwide, so give them a try, should you have the chance. In total, there are over 500 different water brands in Italy. Sampling all 500 of them would be an interesting, if ambitious, addition to any tourist's itinerary.



■ Water As A Luxury Good

A final word about the price of water... Just because there is a large variety of brands does not mean that water is cheap. In fact, water is more expensive than wine at many restaurants. Due to many factors, such as climate, geography, and national infrastructure, Italy does not have much natural fresh water. It is such a precious resource that all public toilets are pay-to-use. While this may seem unbelievably strange to a foreigner, I would suspect that an Italian would find free water at restaurants and free public toilets in the US to be equally strange.

↑ In homes as well as restaurants, mineral water, not tap water, is commonly served.

The World of Gunslinger Girl

When you think of "summer vacation," how long do you normally expect it to last? Most working Americans expect about two weeks, and students have a little over two months. In Italy, vacation time is much, much longer. Most Italian businessmen will take a full month of vacation time, and students have three months. Let us take a closer look at what goes on with an Italian's favorite thing--Vacation!

AN
ITALIAN'S
IDEA OF
VACATION

■ Tourists Beware!

While businessmen and students take long vacations, what about retailers and small business owners? Well, they take vacations, too. Even stores which sell basic necessities will be closed for vacation through almost the entire month of August. A handful of stores catering to tourists may still be open, but grocery stores, restaurants, pharmacies, and any retailers for the local clientele will be closed. Summer vacation in Italy is for the entire family. Leaving someone behind to mind the shop is simply unthinkable.



And everyone *does* leave. Rome, Milan, and other major cities become ghost towns during the summer, as everyone heads for cooler areas. So for any tourist who wants to enjoy the local sights and entertainments of Italy, try not to plan your visit during August!

■ Vacation Homes

Many Americans think of owning a vacation home as a luxury that only the rich can afford. However, in Italy, it isn't uncommon for even regular office workers to own a vacation home, and vacation rental properties are quite common. When you consider how much Italians love going on vacations, even as short as a long weekend, owning a vacation home is much more convenient than staying at a hotel every time.

■ How Italians Spend Their Vacations

So once Italians are on vacation, what do they do? The short answer is, not much. They read, relax on the beach, hang out with friends, or do other, ordinary things. Vacation is, first and foremost, a time for the entire family to rest and recuperate.

Schools, businesses, stores... The entire nation takes the month of August off. While this sounds like a really wonderful thing, after thinking about it, it could be a little inconvenient, too.



The Croce family has their vacation home in Taormina, a famous luxury resort area. People from all over the world go there in the summer.

The World of Gunslinger Girl

In Chapter 71, we saw a little bit of Chief Prosecutor Giovanni's funeral. As most Italians are Catholic, funerals generally follow the Catholic formula. Let's take a look at what a Catholic funeral entails.*

ITALIAN FUNERALS

■ Placing the Body in the Casket

Catholics have no universal rituals for placing the body in the casket. Often verses from the Bible will be read aloud, and hymns will be sung. Prayers will be recited, and holy water or incense may be used. The body is arranged in the casket peacefully, with hands folded over the breast. White flowers may be arranged around the body, and a crucifix or rosary beads may be put in the deceased's hands. The casket lid is then closed, and the coffin is draped with a black cloth.

■ The Procession

Next, the casket is taken from the home or hospital to the church, where the funeral will be held. The procession can be very long, as family members and invited guests all walk to the church as a group.

■ The Funeral Rites

Once the funeral procession reaches the church, things usually proceed as follows.

● Entrance

The priest, the casket, and the family of the deceased enter the church.

● Funeral Mass

Prayers are offered, passages from the Bible are read, and hymns are sung.

● Funeral Services

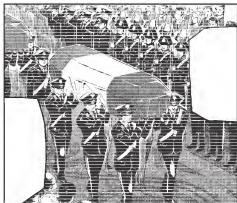
These usually continue on after the formal funeral has ended. Family and friends speak of the deceased, condolences are expressed, and flowers are offered.

■ The Procession, Again

Next, the casket must be moved from the church to the burial ground, where it will be interred. During funerals for soldiers or people of note, the procession route can be crammed with onlookers and well-wishers. If the burial ground is close by, the procession may move by foot instead of by car.

■ The Burial

More prayers are read, and more hymns are sung as the casket is placed into the grave. Family members of the deceased will often hold hands or kiss each other's cheeks to express their sorrow and condolences. Italians often express emotion through hugging and touching.



↑ The funeral procession is for people who were high in the public eye, so it can be attended by many more people than the immediate family and close friends.

■ Memorial Mass

Memorial masses for the deceased are conducted on certain days throughout the year, but usually on the anniversary of their passing. So that's the general gist of a Catholic funeral. As a bonus, here are two controversial issues that many Italians and Catholics face, in regards to funerals.

■ Cremation vs. Internment

Catholicism has long held that bodies are to be buried, not burned. However, with less and less land available for burial, this has led many to consider cremation. Whether to cremate the body and inter the ashes in a local church, or to maintain tradition by burying the body in a remote, rural gravesite is a question that many Italians are forced to consider.

■ Mourning Garments Are Which Color?

During Italian funerals, not many people wear black. Most will wear dark gray or another very dark color. However, if the deceased was a politician or a soldier, then most mourners will wear black.

*This is simply one example of a funeral. Individual funerals will vary with local traditions and customs.

The World of Gunslinger Girl

HERBAL TEAS

Beautiful color. Appealing fragrance. Gentle flavors. And one cannot forget their various health effects. Herbal teas are drinks that heal both body and soul. Let us go into a little more depth on the drink that Henrietta and the girls enjoyed back in Chapter 72.

In Chapter 72, Triela commented on their tea for the day, and Claes answered that she had made it from her lemongrass. I bet for many Gunslinger Girl fans, that line made perfect sense. After all, in Chapter 59 (Volume 11 of the manga), there is a scene where Claes and Beatrice are carrying potted lemongrass plants indoors. That is where she got the lemongrass for her tea.

Gardening, and especially growing herbs, is one of Claes' favorite pastimes. Having gotten permission, she built a small garden on the corner of the Agency grounds, and she has been growing several herbs there. She is first shown planting the herbs back in Chapter 18 (Volume 4), and she mentions that she hopes to use them for herbal baths and teas. Eagle-eyed readers will have noticed that the first goal, an herbal bath, was reached in Chapter 50 (Volume 9, left side panel).

→ It looks like Claes has enjoyed the herbs she's grown during both bath and tea time.



Herbs are hardy plants that grow well in the wild, making them a good starting-point for novice gardeners. Perhaps you may even try your hand at growing herbs for your own herbal tea someday. It may taste a little different and a little fresher than store-bought brands.

On a final note, let's explore some of the medicinal effects that herbs can have. Keep these in mind the next time you try some herbal tea.



← Lemongrass is hurt by cold temperatures, so Claes ever divided in her care of the plants, has moved them indoors for the winter.



● Lemongrass

Good for refreshing a tired body and increasing concentration, this was the herb that Claes used in her first teas.

● Chamomile

Not only does this herb help a stressed body relax and sleep well, it also has anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidizing properties. It has been used as a folk remedy in Europe for centuries.

● Rosemary

Rosemary helps to steady nerves and to improve memory. Some histories say the ancient Greeks viewed rosemary as the scholar's guardian during exams.

The World of Gunslinger Girl

A Brain-Computer Interface (BCI) is the machine that Cristiano was using at the end of this volume. He uses its monitor and computer-generated voice to communicate with Giacomo. Now, while it's true that the BCI doesn't exist in real life to the extent that is portrayed in this work, it is a device that is presently being researched and is in development right now. It isn't something that was entirely made up.

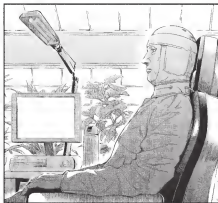
To put it simply, a BCI is a direct link between a human brain and a computer. The system is designed to read electric signals in the brain, and to translate them into electric signals that the computer can process, thus allowing the person to manipulate the computer with their thoughts. Research on this concept originally began as early as the 1970s, though in recent years, this technology has seen jaw-dropping progress.

As a real-world example, there is a private American company called the BrainGate Company. They have developed a computer chip which surgeons can implant into a disabled individual's brain. The company is currently working in collaboration with neurosurgeons and severely disabled patients to perfect the technology. At this point, the chip can allow paralyzed patients confined to wheelchairs to do things like turning the lights on and off, opening and closing email programs, and manipulating motorized arms, all by mere thought. However, this technology is not without its drawbacks. It currently requires invasive surgery to implant the chip into the patient's brain, which carries its own risk of infection and brain injury.

BRAIN-
COM-
PUTER
INTER-
FACE
(BCI)

In order to avoid those risks, research is being put forward in eliminating the need for invasive surgery. There is a version of BCI which looks like a hat covered in electrodes. This device can read the brain signals of the person wearing it, allowing them to manipulate a computer. It is currently in later-stage testing to convert it from experimental to consumer use. It can allow disabled patients to communicate, turning their word-thoughts into a typed word on a computer screen, which a computer-generated voice can read aloud. If realized, it will allow someone who cannot move or speak to communicate with those around them, just by using their thoughts. (Even people like Cristiano.) Unfortunately, even this version of the technology has its downsides. Because it's not directly connected to the brain, its accuracy in reading brainwaves is lower, thus it can take upwards of 20 seconds to process a single word.

This technology is being developed for not only those with debilitating paralysis, but also for those with artificial limbs, blindness, and hearing difficulties. Someday, it may help to save many people.



↑ Severely injured in his battle with the Agency (see Volume 5), Cristiano now uses a BCI to communicate with Giacomo.

So far, we have looked at how the medical community is developing the BCI technology, but that is not the only field which looks to make use of it. Militaries are also developing this technology. It is not clear whether or not this will be actually possible, but the American military has stated their aim to use the technology to keep soldiers physically away from the battlefield. Instead, they would use their thoughts to manipulate unmanned remote drones. It has also been suggested that this technology could be used for clearing landmines.

One last use of the BCI technology is far closer to us than you may be aware. Last year, an American company released a headset with brainwave-reading capabilities for use with video games. The headset functions as a controller, and it is easily purchasable via the Internet. Many game companies are developing products which can make use of this headset-controller. Someday, we may be able to play video games without using our hands. That will certainly be an odd experience!

GUNSLINGERGIRL

DANTE'S INFERNO

After years in exile, Giacomo Dante, the infamous mastermind of the “The Croce Incident,” has returned to take his rightful place as leader of the Five Republics. His first act as new leader is to seize control of Venice’s landmark St. Mark’s Campanile and demand the release of fellow terrorist Aaron Cicero, along with fifty of their comrades-in-arms who are being held as political prisoners. Unable to bow to Dante’s demands, the Italian government has no choice but to meet force with force, in a battle that will have dire consequences. *Gunslinger Girl*’s explosive endgame starts here!

OLDER TEEN (16+)

P.B. -MOD. 93R- MADE in ITALY. PATENTED

WWW.GOMANGA.COM

MANGA



Seven Seas